















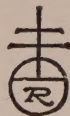




# Little & S Journeys

To the Homes of  
Famous Women

Book Two



MIRIAM EDITION

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MADAME DE STAEL





**F**AR from gaining assurance in meeting Bonaparte oftener, he intimidated me daily more and more. I confusedly felt that no emotion of the heart could possibly take effect upon him. He looks upon a human being as a fact or as a thing, but not as a fellow-creature. He does not hate any more than he loves; there is nothing for him but himself; all other things are so many ciphers. The force of his will lies in the imperturbable calculation of his selfishness.

—“Reflections.”





# MADAME DE STAEL



ATE was very kind to Madame De Stael.

¶ She ran the gamut of life from highest love to direst pain—from rosy dawn to blackest night. Name if you can another woman who touched life at so many points! Home, health, wealth, strength, honors, affection, applause, motherhood, loss, danger, death, defeat, sacrifice, humiliation, illness, banishment, imprisonment, escape. ♣ Again comes hope—returning strength, wealth, recognition, fame tempered by opposition, home, a few friends, and kindly death—cool, all-enfolding death.

¶ If Harriet Martineau showed poor judgment in choosing her parents, we can lay no such charge to the account of Madame De Stael.

They called her “The Daughter of Necker,” and all through life she delighted in the title. The courtier who addressed her thus received a sunny smile and a gentle love-tap on his cheek for pay. A splendid woman is usually the daughter of her father, just as strong men have noble mothers.

Jacques Necker was born in Geneva, and went up to the city, like many another country boy, to make his fortune. He carried with him to Paris innocence, health, high hope, and twenty francs in

silver. He found a place as porter or "trotter" in a bank. Soon they made him clerk.

A letter came one day from a correspondent asking for a large loan, and setting forth a complex financial scheme in which the bank was invited to join. M. Vernet, the head of the establishment, was away, and young Necker took the matter in hand. He made a detailed statement of the scheme, computed probable losses, weighed the pros and cons, and when the employer returned, the plan, all worked out, was on his desk, with young Necker's advice that the loan be made ❀ ❀

"You seem to know all about banking!" was the sarcastic remark of M. Vernet.

"I do," was the proud answer.

"You know too much; I'll just put you back as porter." ❀ The Genevese accepted the reduction and went back as porter without repining. A man of small sense would have resigned his situation at once, just as men are ever forsaking Fortune when she is about to smile; witness Cato committing suicide on the very eve of success.

There is always a demand for efficient men; the market is never glutted; the cities are hungry for them—but the trouble is, few men are efficient.

"It was none of his business!" said M. Vernet to his partner, trying to ease conscience with reasons.

"Yes; but see how he accepted the inevitable!"

"Ah! true, he has two qualities that are only the property of strong men: confidence and resignation, I think—I think I was hasty!"

So young Necker was reinstated, and in six months was cashier, in three years a partner.

Not long after, he married Susanna Curchod, a poor governess. But Mademoiselle Curchod was rich in mental endowment: refined, gentle, spiritual, she was a true mate to the high-minded Necker. She was a Swiss, too, and if you know how a young man and a young woman, country-born, in a strange city are attracted to each other you will better understand this particular situation.

Some years before, Gibbon had loved and courted the beautiful Mademoiselle Curchod in her quiet home in the Jura Mountains. They became engaged. Gibbon wrote home, breaking the happy news to his parents.

"Has the beautiful Curchod of whom you sing, a large dowry?" inquired the mother.

"She has no dowry! I can not tell a lie," was the meek answer. The mother came on and extinguished the match in short order.

Gibbon never married. But he frankly tells us all about his love for Susanna Curchod, and relates how he visited her, in her splendid Paris home. "She greeted me without embarrassment," says Gibbon, resentfully; "and in the evening Necker left us together in the parlor, bade me good-night, and lighting a candle went off to bed!"

Gibbon, historian and philosopher, was made of common clay (for authors are made of clay), like plain mortals, and he could not quite forgive Madame Necker for not being embarrassed on meeting her former lover, neither could he forgive Necker for not being jealous.



But that only daughter of the Neckers, Germaine, pleased Gibbon—pleased him better than the mother, and Gibbon extended his stay in Paris and called often. "She was a splendid creature," Gibbon relates; "only seventeen, but a woman grown, physically and mentally; not handsome, but dazzling, brilliant, emotional, sensitive, daring!"

Gibbon was a bit of a romanticist, as all historians are, and he no doubt thought it would be a fine denouement to life's play to capture the daughter of his old sweetheart, and avenge himself on Fate and the unembarrassed Madame Necker and the unpiqued husband, all at one fell stroke—and she would not be dowerless either. Ha, ha!

But Gibbon forgot that he was past forty, short in stature, and short of breath, and "miles around," as Talleyrand put it ❀ ❀

"I quite like you," said the daring daughter, as the eloquent Gibbon sat by her side at a dinner.

"Why should n't you like me—I came near being your papa!"

"I know, and would I have looked like you?"

"Perhaps."

"What a calamity!"

Even then she possessed that same bubbling wit that was hers years later when she sat at table with D'Alembert. On one side of the great author was Madame Recamier, famous for beauty (and later for a certain "Beauty-Cream"), on the other the daughter of Necker.

"How fortunate!" exclaimed D'Alembert with rapture.

"How fortunate! I sit between Wit and Beauty!"

"Yes, and without possessing either," said Wit.

No mistake, the girl's intellect was too speedy even for Gibbon. She fenced all 'round him and over him, and he soon discovered that she was icily gracious to every one, save her father alone. For him she seemed to outpour all the lavish love of her splendid womanhood. It was unlike the usual calm affection of father and daughter. It was a great and absorbing love, of which even the mother was jealous ❧ ❧

"I can't just exactly make 'em out," said Gibbon, and withdrew in good order.

Before Necker was forty he had accumulated a fortune, and retired from business to devote himself to literature and the polite arts. "I have earned a rest," he said; "besides, I must have leisure to educate my daughter."

Men are constantly "retiring" from business, but somehow the expected Elysium of leisure forever eludes us. Necker had written several good pamphlets and showed the world that he had ability outside of money-making ❧ He was appointed Resident Minister of Geneva at the Court of France. Soon after he became President of the French East India Company, because there was no one else with mind broad enough to fill the place. His house was the gathering-place of many eminent scholars and statesmen. Necker was quiet and reserved; his wife was coldly brilliant, cultured, dignified, religious. The daughter made good every deficiency in both. ¶ She was tall, finely formed, but her features were rather heavy, and in repose there was a languor in her manner and a blankness in her face. This seeming dulness marks all

great actors, but the heaviness is only on the surface; it often covers a sleeping volcano. On recognizing an acquaintance, Germaine Necker's face would be illumined, and her smile would light a room. She could pronounce a man's name so he would be ready to throw himself at her feet, or over a precipice for her. And she made it a rule to know names and to speak them. Then she could listen in a way that complimented; and by a sigh, a nod, an exclamation, bring out the best—such thoughts as a man never knew he had. She made people surprise themselves with their own genius; thus proving that to make a good impression means to make the man pleased with himself. "Any man can be brilliant with her," said a nettled competitor; "but if she wishes, she can sink all women in a room into creeping things."

She knew how to compliment without flattering; her cordiality warmed like wine, and her ready wit, repartee, and ability to thaw all social ice, and to lead conversation along any line, were accomplishments which perhaps have never been equaled. The women who "entertain" often only depress; they are so glowing that everybody else feels himself punk. And these people who are too clever are very numerous; they seem inwardly to fear rivals, and are intent on working while it is called the day.

Over against these are the celebrities who sit in a corner and smile knowingly when they are expected to scintillate. And the individual who talks too much at one time is often painfully silent at another—as if he had made New-Year resolves ☞ But the daughter of Necker entered into con-

versation with candor and abandon; she gave herself to others, and knew whether they wished to talk or listen. On occasion, she could monopolize conversation until she seemed the only person in the room; but all talent was brighter for the added luster of her own. This simplicity, this utter frankness, this complete absence of self-consciousness was like the flight of a bird that never doubts its power, simply because it never thinks of it. Yet continual power produces arrogance, and the soul unchecked finally believes in its own omniscience.

Of course such a matrimonial prize as the daughter of Necker was sought for, even fought for. But the women who can see clear through a man, like a Roentgen ray, do not invite soft demonstration. They give passion a chill. Love demands a little illusion; it must be clothed in mystery. And although we find evidences that many youths stood in the hallways and sighed, the daughter of Necker never saw fit by a nod to bring them to her feet. She was after bigger game—she desired the admiration and approbation of archbishops, cardinals, generals, statesmen, great authors. ¶ Germaine Necker had no conception of what love is. ¶ Many women never have. Had this fine young woman met a man with intellect as clear, mind as vivid, and heart as warm as her own, and had he pierced her through with a wit as strong and keen as she herself wielded, her pride would have been broken and she might have paused. Then they might have looked into each other's eyes and lost self there. And had she thus known love it would have been a complete passion, for the woman seemed capable of it.



A better pen than mine has written, "A woman's love is a dog's love." The dog that craves naught else but the presence of his master, who is faithful to the one and whines out his life on that master's grave, waiting for the caress that never comes and the cheery voice that is never heard—that's the way a woman loves! A woman may admire, respect, revere and obey, but she does not love until a passion seizes upon her that has in it the abandon of Niagara. Do you remember how Nancy Sikes crawls inch by inch to reach the hand of Bill, and reaching it, tenderly caresses the coarse fingers that a moment before clutched her throat, and dies content? That's the love of woman! The prophet spoke of something "passing the love of woman," but the prophet was wrong—there's nothing does.

So Germaine Necker, the gracious, the kindly, the charming, did not love. However, she married—married Baron De Stael, the Swedish Ambassador. He was thirty-seven, she was twenty. De Stael was good-looking, polite, educated. He always smiled at the right time, said bright things in the right way, kept silence when he should, and made no enemies because he agreed with everybody about everything. Stipulations were made; a long agreement was drawn up; it was signed by the party of the first part and duly executed by the party of the second part; sealed, witnessed, sworn to, and the priest was summoned.

It was a happy marriage. The first three years of married life were the happiest Madame De Stael ever knew, she said long afterward.

Possibly there are hasty people who imagine they detect

tincture of iron somewhere in these pages: these good people will say, "Gracious me! why not?"

And so I will admit that these respectable, well-arranged, and carefully planned marriages are often happy and peaceful. The couple may "raise" a large family and slide through life and out of it without a splash. I will also admit that love does not necessarily imply happiness—more often 't is a pain, a wild yearning, and a vague unrest; a haunting sense of heart-hunger that drives a man into exile repeating abstractedly the name "Beatrice! Beatrice!"

And so all the moral I will make now is simply this: the individual who has not known an all-absorbing love has not the spiritual vision that is a passport to Paradise. He forever yammers between the worlds, fit for neither Heaven nor Hell.



NECKER retired from business that he might enjoy peace; his daughter married for the same reason. It was stipulated that she should never be separated from her father. She who stipulates is lost, so far as love goes—but no matter! Married women in France are greater lions in society than maidens can possibly hope to be. The marriage-certificate serves at once as a license for brilliancy, daring, splendor, and it is also a badge of respectability. The marriage-certificate is a document that in all countries is ever taken care of by the woman and never by the man. And this document is especially useful in France, as French dames know. Frenchmen are afraid of an unmarried woman—she means danger, damages, a midnight marriage and other awful things. An unmarried woman in France can not hope to be a social leader; and to be a social leader was the one ambition of Madame De Stael.

It was called the salon of Madame De Stael now. Baron De Stael was known as the husband of Madame De Stael. The salon of Madame Necker was only a matter of reminiscence. The daughter of Necker was greater than her father, and as for Madame Necker, she was a mere figure in towering headdress, point lace and diamonds. Talleyrand summed up the case when he said, "She is one of those dear old things that have to be tolerated."

Madame De Stael had a taste for literature from early womanhood. ✱ She wrote beautiful little essays and read them aloud to her company, and her manuscripts had a circulation like unto her father's bank-notes. She had the faculty of absorbing beautiful thoughts and sentiments,

and no woman ever expressed them in a more graceful way. People said she was the greatest woman author of her day. "You mean of all time," corrected Diderot. They called her "the High Priestess of Letters," "the Minerva of Poetry," "Sappho Returned," and all that. Her commendation meant success and her indifference failure. She knew politics, too, and her hands were on all wires. Did she wish to placate a minister, she invited him to call, and once there he was as putty in her hands. She skimmed the surface of all languages, all arts, all history, but best of all she knew the human heart.

¶ Of course there was a realm of knowledge she wist not of—the initiates of which never ventured within her scope. She had nothing for them—they kept away. But the proud, the vain, the ambitious, the ennui-ridden, the-people-who-wish-to-be, and who are ever looking for the strong man to give them help—these thronged her parlors.

And when you have named these you have named all those who are foremost in commerce, politics, art, education, philanthropy and religion. The world is run by second-rate people. The best are speedily crucified, or else never heard of until long after they are dead. ✱ Madame De Stael, in Seventeen Hundred Eighty-eight, was queen of the people who ran the world—at least the French part of it.

But intellectual power, like physical strength, endures but for a day. Giants who have a giant's strength and use it like a giant must be put down. If you have intellectual power, hide it!

Do thy daily work in thine own little way and be content. The personal touch repels as well as attracts. Thy presence

is a menace—thy existence an affront—beware! They are weaving a net for thy feet, and hear you not the echo of hammering, as of men building a scaffold?

Go read history! Thinkest thou that all men are mortal save thee alone, and that what has befallen others can not happen to thee? ✱ The Devil has no title to this property he now promises. Fool! thou hast no more claim on Fate than they who have gone before, and what has come to others in like conditions must come to thee. God himself can not stay it; it is so written in the stars. Power to lead men! Pray that thy prayer shall ne'er be granted—'t is to be carried to the topmost pinnacle of Fame's temple tower, and there cast headlong upon the stones beneath. Beware! beware!!





**M**ADAME DE STAEL was of an intensely religious nature throughout her entire life; such characters swing between license and asceticism. But the charge of atheism told largely against her even among the so-called liberals, for liberals are often very illiberal. Marie Antoinette gathered her skirts close about her and looked at the "Minerva of Letters" with suspicion in her big, open eyes; cabinet officers forgot her requests to call, and when a famous wit once coolly asked, "Who was that Madame De Stael we used to read about?" people roared with laughter. ¶ Necker, as Minister of Finance, had saved the State from financial ruin; then had been deposed and banished; then recalled. In September, Seventeen Hundred Ninety, he was again compelled to flee. He escaped to Switzerland, disguised as a pedler. The daughter wished to accompany him, but this was impossible, for only a week before she had given birth to her first child.

But favor came back, and in the mad tumult of the times the freedom and wit and sparkle of her salon became a need to the poets and philosophers, if city wits can be so called. ¶ Society shone as never before. In it was the good nature of the mob. It was no time to sit quietly at home and enjoy a book—men and women must "go somewhere," they must "do something." The women adopted the Greek costume and appeared in simple white robes caught at the shoulders with miniature stilettos. Many men wore crape on their arms in pretended memory of friends who had been kissed by Madame Guillotine. There was fever in the air, fever in the blood, and the passions held high carnival. In solitude,

danger depresses all save the very strongest, but the mob (ever the symbol of weakness) is made up of women—it is an effeminate thing. It laughs hysterically at death and cries, “On with the dance!” Women represent the opposite poles of virtue.

The fever continues: a “poverty party” is given by Madame De Stael, where men dress in rags and women wear tattered gowns that ill conceal their charms. “We must get used to it,” she said, and everybody laughed. Soon, men in the streets wear red nightcaps, women appear in nightgowns, rich men wear wooden shoes, and young men in gangs of twelve parade the avenues at night carrying heavy clubs, hurrahing for this or that.

Yes, society in Paris was never so gay.

The salons were crowded, and politics was the theme. When the discussion waxed too warm, some one would start a hymn and all would chime in until the contestants were drowned out and in token of submission joined in the chorus.

¶ But Madame De Stael was very busy all these days. Her house was filled with refugees, and she ran here and there for passports and pardons, and beseeched ministers and archbishops for interference or assistance or amnesty or succor and all those things that great men can give or bestow or effect or filch. And when her smiles failed to win the wished-for signature, she still had tears that would move a heart of brass.

About this time Baron De Stael fades from our vision, leaving with Madame three children.

“It was never anything but a ‘mariage de convenance’ any-

way, what of it?" and Madame bursts into tears and throws herself into Farquar's arms.

"Compose yourself, my dear—you are spoiling my gown," says the Duchesse.

"I stood him as long as I could," continued Madame.

"You mean he stood you as long as he could."

"You naughty thing!—why don't you sympathize with me?"

¶ Then both women fall into a laughing fit that is interrupted by the servant, who announces Benjamin Constant.

Constant came as near winning the love of Madame De Stael as any man ever did. He was politician, scholar, writer, orator, courtier. But with it all he was a boor, for when he had won the favor of Madame De Stael he wrote a long letter to Madame Charriere, with whom he had lived for several years in the greatest intimacy, giving reasons why he had forsaken her, and ending with an ecstasy in praise of the Stael.

If a man can do a thing more brutal than to humiliate one woman at the expense of another, I do not know it. And without entering any defense for the men who love several women at one time, I wish to make a clear distinction between the men who bully and brutalize women for their own gratification and the men who find their highest pleasure in pleasing women. The latter may not be a paragon, yet as his desire is to give pleasure, not to corral it, he is a totally different being from the man who deceives, badgers, humiliates, and quarrels with one who can not defend herself, in order that he may find an excuse for leaving her.

A good many of Constant's speeches were written by Madame De Stael, and when they traveled together through Germany

he no doubt was a great help to her in preparing the "De l'Allemagne."

But there was a little man approaching from out the mist of obscurity who was to play an important part in the life of Madame De Stael. He had heard of her wide-reaching influence, and such an influence he could not afford to forego—it must be used to further his ends.

Yet the First Consul did not call on her, and she did not call on the First Consul. They played a waiting game. "If he wishes to see me, he knows that I am home Thursdays!" she said with a shrug.

"Yes, but a man in his position reverses the usual order: he does not make the first call!"

"Evidently!" said Madame, and the subject dropped with a dull thud.

Word came from somewhere that Baron De Stael was severely ill. The wife was thrown into a tumult of emotion. She must go to him at once—a wife's duty was to her husband first of all. She left everything, and hastening to his bedside, there ministered to him tenderly. ✽ But death claimed him. The widow returned to Paris clothed in deep mourning. Crape was tied on the door-knocker and the salon was closed.

¶ The First Consul sent condolences.

"The First Consul is a joker," said Dannion solemnly, and took snuff.

In six weeks the salon was again opened. Not long after, at a dinner, Napoleon and Madame De Stael sat side by side.

"Your father was a great man," said Napoleon.

He had gotten in the first compliment when she had planned

otherwise. She intended to march her charms in a phalanx upon him, but he would not have it so. Her wit fell flat and her prettiest smile brought only the remark, "If the wind veers North it may rain."

They were rivals—that was the trouble; France was not big enough for both.

Madame De Stael's book about Germany had been duly announced, puffed, printed. Ten thousand copies were issued and—seized upon by Napoleon's agents and burned.

"The edition is exhausted," cried Madame, as she smiled through her tears and searched for her pocket-handkerchief.

¶ The trouble with the book was that nowhere in it was Napoleon mentioned. Had Napoleon never noticed the book, the author would have been wofully sorry. As it was she was pleased, and when the last guest had gone she and Benjamin Constant laughed, shook hands, and ordered lunch ❧ ❧

But it was not so funny when Fouché called, apologized, coughed, and said the air in Paris was bad.

So Madame De Stael had to go—it was "Ten Years of Exile."

In that book you can read all about it. She retired to Coppet, and all the griefs, persecutions, disappointments and heart-aches were doubtless softened by the inward thought of the distinction that was hers in being the first woman banished by Napoleon and of being the only woman he thoroughly feared ❧ ❧

When it came Napoleon's turn to go and the departure for Elba was at hand, it will be remembered he bade good-by personally to those who had served him so faithfully. It was



an affecting scene when he kissed his generals and saluted the swarthy grenadiers in the same way. When told of it Madame picked a petal or two from her bouquet and said, "You see, my dears, the difference is this: while Judas kissed but one, the Little Man kissed forty."

Napoleon was scarcely out of France before Madame was back in Paris with all her books and wit and beauty. An ovation was given the daughter of Necker such as Paris alone can give.

But Napoleon did not stay at Elba, at least not according to any accounts I have read. ¶ When word came that he was marching upon Paris, Madame hastily packed up her MSS. and started in hot haste for Coppet.

But when the eighty days had passed and the bugaboo was safely on board the "Bellerophon," she came back to the scenes she loved so well and to what for her was the only heaven—Paris.

She has been called a philosopher and a literary light. But she was only socio-literary. Her written philosophy does not represent the things she felt were true—simply those things she thought it would be nice to say. She cultivated literature, only that she might shine. Love, wealth, health, husband, children—all were sacrificed that she might lead society and win applause. No one ever feared solitude more: she must have those about her who would minister to her vanity and upon whom she could shower her wit. As a type her life is valuable, and in these pages that traverse the entire circle of feminine virtues and foibles she surely must have a place.

In her last illness she was attended daily by those faithful subjects who had all along recognized her sovereignty—in Society she was Queen. She surely won her heart's desire, for to that bed from which she was no more to rise, courtiers came and kneeling kissed her hand, and women by the score whom she had befriended paid her the tribute of their tears. ¶ She died in Paris aged fifty-one.



**W**HEN you are in Switzerland and take the little steamer that plies on Lake Lemman from Lausanne to Geneva, you will see on the Western shore a tiny village that clings close around a chateau, like little oysters around the parent shell. This is the village of Coppet that you behold, and the central building that seems to be a part of the very landscape is the Chateau De Necker. This was the home of Madame De Stael and the place where so many refugees sought safety. "Coppet is Hell in motion," said Napoleon. "The woman who lives there has a petticoat full of arrows that could hit a man were he seated on a rainbow." She combines in her active head and strong heart Rousseau and Mirabeau; and then shields herself behind a shift and screams if you approach. To attract attention to herself she calls, 'Help, help!'

The man who voiced these words was surely fit rival to the chatelaine of this vine-covered place of peace that lies smiling an ironical smile in the sunshine on yonder hillside.

Coppet bristles with history.

Could Coppet speak it must tell of Voltaire and Rousseau who had knocked at its gates; of John Calvin; of Montmorency; of Hautville (for whom Victor Hugo named a chateau); of Fanny Burney and Madame Recamier and Girardin (pupil of Rousseau); and Lafayette and hosts of others who are to us but names, but who in their day were greatest among all the sons of men.

Chief of all was the great Necker, who himself planned and built the main edifice that his daughter "might ever call it home." Little did he know that it would serve as her prison,

and that from here she would have to steal away in disguise. But yet it was the place she called home for full two decades. Here she wrote and wept and laughed and sang: hating the place when here, loving it when away. Here she came when De Stael had died, and here she brought her children. Here she received the caresses of Benjamin Constant, and here she won the love of pale, handsome Rocco, and here, "when past age," gave birth to his child. Here and in Paris, in quick turn, the tragedy and comedy of her life were played; and here she sleeps.

In the tourist season there are many visitors at the chateau. A grave old soldier, wearing on his breast the Cross of the Legion of Honor, meets you at the lodge and conducts you through the halls, the salon and the library. There are many family portraits, and mementos without number, to bring back the past that is gone forever. Inscribed copies of books from Goethe and Schiller and Schlegel and Byron are in the cases, and on the walls are to be seen pictures of Necker, Rocco, De Stael and Albert, the firstborn son, decapitated in a duel by a swinging stroke from a German saber, on account of a king and two aces held in his sleeve.

Beneath the old chateau dances a mountain brook, cold from the Jura; in the great courtway is a fountain and fish-pond, and all around are flowering plants and stately palms. All is quiet and orderly. No children play, no merry voices call, no glad laughter echoes through these courts. Even the birds have ceased to sing.

The quaint chairs in the parlors are pushed back with precision against the wall, and the funereal silence that

reigns supreme seems to say that death yesterday came, and an hour ago all the inmates of the gloomy mansion, save the old soldier, followed the hearse afar and have not yet returned.

We are conducted out through the garden, along gravel walks, across the well-trimmed lawn, and before a high iron gate, walled in on both sides with massive masonry, the old soldier stops, and removes his cap. Standing with heads uncovered, we are told that within rests the dust of Madame De Stael, her parents, her children, and her children's children—four generations in all.

The steamer whistles at the wharf as if to bring us back from dreams and mold and death, and we hasten away, walking needlessly fast, looking back furtively to see if grim spectral shapes are following after. None is seen, but we do not breathe freely until aboard the steamer and two short whistles are heard, and the order is given to cast off. We push off slowly from the stone pier, and all is safe.









ELIZABETH FRY

ELIZABETH FRY



**W**HEN thee builds a prison, thee had better build  
with the thought ever in thy mind that thee and thy  
children may occupy the cells.—“Report on Paris Prisons,”  
Addressed to the King of France.





# ELIZABETH FRY



HE Mennonite, Dunkard, Shaker, Oneida Communist, Mormon and Quaker are all one people, varying only according to environment. They are all Come-outers ♣ They turn to plain clothes, hard work, religious thought, eschewing the pomps and vanities of the world—all for the same reasons. Scratch any one of them and you will find the true type. The monk of the Middle Ages was the same man, his peculiarity being an extreme asceticism that caused him to count sex a mistake on the part of God. And this same question has been a stumbling-block for ages to the type we now have under the glass. A man who gives the question of sex too much attention is very apt either to have no wife at all or else four or five. If a Franciscan friar of the olden time happened to glance at a clothesline on which, gaily waving in the wanton winds, was a smock-frock, he wore peas in his sandals for a month and a day.

The Shaker does not count women out because the founder of the sect was a woman, but he is a complete celibate and depends on Gentiles to populate the earth. The Dunkard quotes Saint Paul and marries because he must, but regards

romantic love as a thing of which Deity is jealous, and also a bit ashamed. The Oneida Community clung to the same thought, and to obliterate selfishness held women in common, tracing pedigree, after the manner of ancient Sparta, through the female line, because there was no other way. The Mormon incidentally and accidentally adopted polygamy.

The Quakers have for the best part looked with disfavor on passionate love. In the worship of Deity they separate women from men. But all oscillations are equalized by swingings to the other side. ✽ The Quakers have often discarded a distinctive marriage ceremony, thus slanting toward natural selection. And I might tell you of how in one of the South American States there is a band of Friends who have discarded the rite entirely, making marriage a private and personal contract between the man and the woman—a sacred matter of conscience; and should the man and woman find after a trial that their mating was a mistake, they are as free to separate as they were to marry, and no obloquy is attached in any event. Harriet Martineau, Quaker in sympathy, although not in name, being an independent fighter armed with a long squirrel-rifle of marvelous range and accuracy, pleaded strongly and boldly for a law that would make divorce as free and simple as marriage. Harriet once called marriage a mouse-trap, and thereby sent shivers of surprise and indignation up a bishop's back.

But there is one thing among all these quasi-ascetic sects that has ever been in advance of the great mass of humanity from which they are detached parts: they have given woman her rights; whereas, the mass has always prated, and does

yet, mentioning it in statute law, that the male has certain natural "rights," and the women only such rights as are granted her by the males. And the reason of this wrong-headed attitude on part of the mob is plain. It rules by force, whereas the semi-ascetic sects decry force, using only moral suasion, falling back on the Christ doctrine of non-resistance. This has given their women a chance to prove that they have just as able minds as the men, if not better.

That these non-resistants are the salt of the earth none who know them can deny. It was the residents of the monasteries in the Middle Ages who kept learning and art from dying off the face of Europe. They built such churches and performed such splendid work in art that we are hushed into silence before the dignity of the ruins of Melrose, Dryburgh and Furness. There are no paupers among the Quakers, a "criminal class" is a thing no Mennonite understands, no Dunkard is a drunkard, the Oneida Communists were all well educated and in dollars passing rich, while the Mormons have accumulated wealth at the rate of over eleven hundred dollars a man per year, which is more than three times as good a record as can be shown by New York or Pennsylvania. And further, until the Gentiles bore down upon her, Utah had no use for either prisons, asylums or almshouses. Until the Gentiles crowded into Salt Lake City, there was no "tenderloin district," no "dangerous class," no gambling "dives." Instead, there was universal order, industry, sobriety. It is well to recognize the fact that the quasi-ascetic, possessed of a religious idea, persecuted to a point that holds him to his work, is the best type of citizen

the world has ever known. Tobacco, strong drink, and opium alternately lull and excite, soothe and elevate, but always destroy; yet they do not destroy our ascetic, for he knows them not. He does not deplete himself by drugs, rivalry, strife or anger. He believes in co-operation, not competition. He works and prays. He keeps a good digestion, an even pulse, a clear conscience; and as man's true wants are very few, our subject grows rich and has not only ample supplies for himself, but is enabled to minister to others. He is earth's good Samaritan. It was Tolstoy and his daughter who started soup-houses in Russia and kept famine at bay. Your true monk never passed by on the other side; ah, no! the business of the old-time priest was to do good. The Quaker is his best descendant—he is the true philanthropist.

If jeered and hooted and finally oppressed, these protesters will form a clan or sect and adopt a distinctive garb and speech. If persecuted, they will hold together, as cattle on the prairies huddle against the storm. But if left alone the Law of Reversion to Type catches the second generation, and the young men and maidens secrete millinery, just as birds do a brilliant plumage, and the strange sect merges into and is lost in the mass. The Jews did not say, Go to, we will be peculiar, but, as Mr. Zangwill has stated, they have remained a peculiar people simply because they have been proscribed.

The successful monk, grown rich and feeling secure, turns voluptuary and becomes the very thing that he renounced in his monastic vows. Over-anxious bicyclists run into the object they wish to avoid. We are attracted to the thing we



despise; and we despise it because it attracts. A recognition of this principle will make plain why so many temperance fanatics are really drunkards trying hard to keep sober. In us all is the germ of the thing we hate; we become like the thing we hate; we are the thing we hate. Ex-Quakers in Philadelphia, I am told, are very dressy people. But before a woman becomes a genuine admitted non-Quaker, the rough, gray woolen dress shades off by almost imperceptible degrees into a dainty silken lilac, whose generous folds have a most peculiar and seductive rustle; the bonnet becomes smaller, and pertly assumes a becoming ruche, from under which steal forth daring winsome ringlets; while at the neck, purest of cream-white kerchiefs jealously conceal the charms that a mere worldly woman might reveal. Then the demi-monde, finding themselves neglected, bribe the dressmakers and adopt the costume.

Thus does civilization, like the cyclone, move in spirals.



**I**N a sermon preached at the City Temple, June Eighteenth, Eighteen Hundred Ninety-six, Doctor Joseph Parker said: "There it was—there! at Smithfield Market, a stone's throw from here, that Ridley and Latimer were burned. Over this spot the smoke of martyr fires hovered. And I pray for a time when they will hover again. Aye, that is what we need! the rack, the gallows, chains, dungeons, fagots!"

Yes, those are his words, and it was two days before it came to me that Doctor Parker knew just what he was talking about. Persecution can not stamp out virtue, any more than man's effort can obliterate matter. Man changes the form of things, but he does not cancel their essence. And this is as true of the unseen attributes of spirit as it is of the elements of matter. Did the truths taught by Latimer and Ridley go out with the flames that crackled about their limbs? Were their names written for the last time in smoke? 'T were vain to ask. The bishop who instigated their persecution gave them certificates for immortality. But the bishop did not know it—bishops who persecute know not what they do.

Let us guess the result if Jesus had been eminently successful, gathering about him, with the years, the strong and influential men of Jerusalem! Suppose he had fallen asleep at last of old age, and, full of honors, been carried to his own tomb, patterned after that of Joseph of Arimathea, but richer far—what then? And if Socrates had apologized and had not drunk of the hemlock, how about his philosophy? and would Plato have written the "Phædo"?

No religion is pure except in its state of poverty and persecution; the good things of earth are our corrupters. All life is from the sun, but fruit too well loved of the sun falls first and rots. The religion that is fostered by the State and upheld by a standing army may be a pretty good religion, but it is not the Christ religion, call you it "Christianity" never so loudly.

Martyr and persecutor are usually cut off the same piece. They are the same type of man; and looking down the centuries they seem to have shifted places easily. As to which is persecutor and which is martyr is only a question of transient power. They are constantly teaching the trick to each other, just as scolding parents have saucy children. They are both good people; their sincerity can not be doubted. Marcus Aurelius, the best emperor Rome ever had, persecuted the Christians; while Caligula, Rome's worst emperor, did n't know there were any Christians in his dominion, and if he had known would not have cared.

The persecutor and martyr both belong to the cultus known as "Muscular Christianity," the distinguishing feature of which is a final appeal to force. We should respect it for the frankness of the name in which it delights—Muscular Christianity being a totally different thing from Christianity, which smitten turns the other cheek.

But the Quaker, best type of the non-resistant quasi-ascetic, is the exception that proves the rule; he may be persecuted, but he persecutes not again. He is the best authenticated type living of primitive Christian. That the religion of Jesus was a purely reactionary movement, suggested by the smug

complacency and voluptuous condition of the times, most thinking men agree. Where rich Pharisees adopt a standard of life that can only be maintained by devouring widows' houses and oppressing the orphan, the needs of the hour bring to the front a man who will swing the pendulum to the other side. When society plays tennis with truth, and pitch and toss with all the expressions of love and friendship, certain ones will confine their speech to yea, yea, and nay, nay & When men utter loud prayers on street corners, some one will suggest that the better way to pray is to retire to your closet and shut the door. When self-appointed rulers wear purple and scarlet and make broad their phylacteries, some one will suggest that honest men had better adopt a simplicity of attire. When a whole nation grows mad in its hot endeavor to become rich, and the Temple of the Most High is cumbered by the seats of money-changers, already in some Galilean village sits a youth, conscious of his Divine kinship, plaiting a scourge of cords.

The gray garb of the Quaker is only a revulsion from a flutter of ribbons and a towering headgear of hues that shame the lily and rival the rainbow. Beau Brummel, lifting his hat with great flourish to nobility and standing hatless in the presence of illustrious nobodies, finds his counterpart in William Penn, who was born with his hat on and uncovers to no one. The height of Brummel's hat finds place in the width of Penn's.

Quakerism is a protest against an idle, vain, voluptuous and selfish life & It is the natural recoil from insincerity, vanity and gormandism which, growing glaringly offensive,

causes these certain men and women to "come out" and stand firm for plain living and high thinking. And were it not for this divine principle in humanity that prompts individuals to separate from the mass when sensuality threatens to hold supreme sway, the race would be snuffed out in hopeless night. These men who come out effect their mission, not by making all men Come-outers, but by imperceptibly changing the complexion of the mass. They are the true and literal saviors of mankind.





**N**ORWICH has several things to recommend it to the tourist, chief of which is the cathedral. Great, massive, sullen structure—begun in the Eleventh Century—it adheres more closely to its Norman type than does any other building in England.

Within sound of the tolling bells of this great cathedral, aye, almost within the shadow of its turrets, was born, in Seventeen Hundred Eighty, Elizabeth Gurney. Her line of ancestry traced directly back to the De Gournays who came with William the Conqueror, and laid the foundations of this church and of England's civilization. To the sensitive, imaginative girl this sacred temple, replete with history, fading off into storied song and curious legend, meant much. She haunted its solemn transepts, and followed with eager eyes the carved bosses on the ceiling, to see if the cherubs pictured there were really alive. She took children from the street and conducted them thither, explaining that it was her grandfather who laid the mortar between the stones and reared the walls and placed the splendid colored windows, on which reflections of real angels were to be seen, and where Madonnas winked when the wind was East. And the children listened with open mouths and marveled much, and this encouraged the pale little girl with the wondering eyes, and she led them to the tomb of Sir William Boleyn, whose granddaughter, Anne Boleyn, used often to come here and garland with flowers the grave above which our toddlers talked in whispers, and where, yesterday, I, too, stood ❀ ❀

And so Elizabeth grew in years and in stature and in under-

standing; and although her parents were not members of the Established Religion, yet a great cathedral is greater than sect, and to her it was the true House of Prayer. It was there that God listened to the prayers of His children. She loved the place with an idolatrous love and with all the splendid superstition of a child, and thither she went to kneel and ask fulfilment of her heart's desire. All the beauties of ancient and innocent days moved radiant and luminous in the azure of her mind. But time crept on and a woman's penetrating comprehension came to her, and the dreams of youth shifted off into the realities of maturity, and she saw that many who came to pray were careless, frivolous people, and that the vergers did their work without more reverence than did the stablemen who cared for her father's horses. And once when twilight was veiling the choir, and all the worshipers had departed, she saw a curate strike a match on the cloister wall, to light his pipe, and then with the rector laugh loudly, because the bishop had forgotten and read his "Te Deum Laudamus" before his "Gloria in Excelsis." ❧ ❧

By degrees it came to her that the lord bishop of this holy place was in the employ of the State, and that the State was master too of the army and the police and the ships that sailed away to New Zealand, carrying in their holds women and children, who never came back, and men who, like the lord bishop, had forgotten this and done that when they should have done the other.

Once, in the streets of Norwich she saw a dozen men with fetters riveted to their legs, all fastened to one clanking chain,

breaking stone in the drizzle of a Winter rain ❀ And the thought came to her that the rich ladies, wrapped in furs, who rolled by in their carriages, going to the cathedral to pray, were no more God's children than these wretches breaking stone from the darkness of a Winter morning until darkness settled over the earth again at night.

She saw plainly the patent truth that, if some people wore gaudy and costly raiment, others must dress in rags; if some ate and drank more than they needed, and wasted the good things of earth, others must go hungry; if some never worked with their hands, others must needs toil continuously.

The Gurneys were nominally Friends, but they had gradually slipped away from the directness of speech, the plainness of dress, and the simplicity of the Quakers. They were getting rich on government contracts—and who wants to be ridiculous anyway? So, with consternation, the father and mother heard the avowal of Elizabeth to adopt the extreme customs of the Friends. They sought to dissuade her. They pointed out the uselessness of being singular, and the folly of adopting a mode of life that makes you a laughing-stock. But this eighteen-year-old girl stood firm. She had resolved to live the Christ-life and devote her energies to lessening the pains of earth. Life was too short for frivolity; no one could afford to compromise with evil. She became the friend of children; the champion of the unfortunate; she sided with the weak; she was their friend and comforter. Her life became a cry in favor of the oppressed, a defense of the downtrodden, an exaltation of self-devotion, a prayer for universal sympathy, liberty and light. She pleaded for the vicious, recognizing

that all are sinners and that those who do unlawful acts are no more sinners in the eyes of God than we who think them so.

The religious nature and sex-life are closely akin. The woman possessing a high religious fervor is also capable of a great and passionate love. But the Norwich Friends did not believe in a passionate love, except as the work of the devil. Yet this they knew, that marriage tames a woman as nothing else can. They believed in religion, of course—but not an absorbing, fanatical religion! Elizabeth should get married—it would cure her mental maladies: exaltation of spirit in a girl is a dangerous thing anyway. Nothing subdues like marriage.

¶ It may not be generally known, but your religious ascetic is a great matchmaker ♪ In all religious communities, especially rural communities, men who need wives need not advertise—there are self-appointed committees of old ladies who advise and look after such matters closely. The immanence of sex becomes vicarious, and that which once dwelt in the flesh is now a thought: like men-about-town, whose vices finally become simply mental, so do these old ladies carry on courtships by power of attorney.

And so the old ladies found a worthy Quaker man who would make a good husband for Elizabeth. The man was willing. He wrote a letter to her from his home in London, addressing it to her father. The letter was brief and businesslike. It described himself in modest but accurate terms. He weighed ten stone and was five feet eight inches high; he was a merchant with a goodly income; and in disposition was all that was to be desired—at least he said so. His pedigree was

standard. ¶ The Gurneys looked up this Mr. Fry, merchant, of London, and found all as stated. He checked O. K. He was invited to visit at Norwich; he came, he saw, and was conquered. He liked Elizabeth, and Elizabeth liked him—she surely did or she would never have married him.

Elizabeth bore him twelve children. Mr. Fry was certainly an excellent and amiable man. I find it recorded, “He never in any way hampered his wife’s philanthropic work,” and with this testimonial to the excellence of Mr. Fry’s character we will excuse him from these pages and speak only of his wife ❀ ❀

Contrary to expectations, Elizabeth was not tamed by marriage. She looked after her household with diligence; but instead of confining her “social duties” to following hotly after those in station above her, she sought out those in the stratum beneath. Soon after reaching London she began taking long walks alone, watching the people, especially the beggars. The lowly and the wretched interested her. She saw, girl though she was, that beggardom and vice were twins.

In one of her daily walks, she noticed on a certain corner a frowsled woman holding a babe, and thrusting out a grimy hand for alms, telling a woful tale of a dead soldier husband to each passer-by. Elizabeth stopped and talked with the woman. As the day was cold, she took off her mittens and gave them to the beggar, and went her way. The next day she again saw the woman on the same corner and again talked with her, asking to see the baby held so closely within the tattered shawl. An intuitive glance (mother herself or



soon to be) told her that this sickly babe was not the child of the woman who held it. She asked questions that the woman evaded. Pressed further, the beggar grew abusive, and took refuge in curses, with dire threats of violence. Mrs. Fry withdrew, and waiting for nightfall followed the woman: down a winding alley, past rows of rotting tenements, into a cellar below a ginshop. There, in this one squalid room, she found a dozen babies, all tied fast in cribs or chairs, starving, or dying of inattention. The woman, taken by surprise, did not grow violent this time: she fled, and Mrs. Fry, sending for two women Friends, took charge of the sufferers.

This sub-cellar nursery opened the eyes of Mrs. Fry to the grim fact that England, professing to be Christian, building costly churches, and maintaining an immense army of paid priests, was essentially barbaric. She set herself to the task of doing what she could while life lasted to lessen the horror of ignorance and sin.

Newgate Prison then, as now, stood in the center of the city. It was necessary to have it in a conspicuous place so that all might see the result of wrongdoing and be good. Along the front of the prison were strong iron gratings, where the prisoners crowded up to talk with their friends. Through these gratings the unhappy wretches called to strangers for alms, and thrust out long wooden spoons for contributions, that would enable them to pay their fines. There was a woman's department; but if the men's department was too full, men and women were herded together.

Mrs. Fry worked for her sex, so of these I will speak. Women who had children under seven years of age took them to

prison with them; every week babes were born there, so that at one time, in the year Eighteen Hundred Twenty-six, we find there were one hundred ninety women and one hundred children in Newgate. There was no bedding. No clothing was supplied, and those who had no friends outside to supply them clothing were naked or nearly so, and would have been entirely were it not for that spark of divinity which causes the most depraved of women to minister to one another. Women hate only their successful rivals. The lowest of women will assist one another when there is a dire emergency.

In this pen, awaiting trial, execution or transportation, were girls of twelve to senile, helpless creatures of eighty. All were thrust together. Hardened criminals, besotted prostitutes, maidservants accused of stealing thimbles, married women suspected of blasphemy, pure-hearted, brave-natured girls who had run away from brutal parents or more brutal husbands, insane persons—all were herded together. All the keepers were men. Patrolling the walls were armed guards, who were ordered to shoot all who tried to escape. These guards were usually on good terms with the women prisoners—hobnobbing at will. When the mailed hand of government had once thrust these women behind iron bars, and relieved virtuous society of their presence, it seemed to think it had done its duty. Inside, no crime was recognized save murder. These women fought, overpowered the weak, stole from and maltreated each other. Sometimes, certain ones would combine for self-defense, forming factions. Once, the Governor of the prison, bewigged, powdered,

lace-befrilled, ventured pompously into the women's department without his usual armed guard; fifty hags set upon him. In a twinkling his clothing was torn to shreds too small for carpet-rags, and in two minutes by the sand-glass, when he got back to the bars, lustily calling for help, he was as naked as a cherub, even if not as innocent.

Visitors who ventured near to the grating were often asked to shake hands, and if once a grip was gotten upon them the man was drawn up close, while long, sinewy fingers grabbed his watch, handkerchief, neckscarf or hat—all was pulled into the den. Sharp nail-marks on the poor fellow's face told of the scrimmage, and all the time the guards on the walls and the spectators roared with laughter. Oh, it was awfully funny!

One woman whose shawl was snatched and sucked into the maelstrom complained to the police, and was told that folks inside of Newgate could not be arrested, and that a good motto for outsiders was to keep away from dangerous places.

¶ Every morning at nine a curate read prayers at the prisoners. The curate stood well outside the grating; while all the time from inside loud cries of advice were given and sundry remarks tendered him concerning his personal appearance. The frightful hilarity of the mob saved these wretches from despair. But the curate did his duty: he who has ears to hear let him hear.

Waiting in the harbor were ships loading their freight of sin, crime and woe for Botany Bay; at Tyburn every week women were hanged. Three hundred offenses were punishable with death; but, as in the West, where horse-stealing is the

supreme offense, most of the hangings were for smuggling, forgery or shoplifting. England being a nation of shopkeepers could not forgive offenses that might injure a haberdasher.

Little Mrs. Fry, in the plainest of Quaker gray dress, with bonnet to match, stood outside Newgate and heard the curate read prayers. She resolved to ask the Governor of the prison if she might herself perform the office. The Governor was polite, but stated there was no precedent for such an important move—he must have time to consider. Mrs. Fry called again, and permission was granted, with strict orders that she must not attempt to proselyte, and, further, she better not get too near the grating.

Mrs. Fry gave the great man a bit of fright by quietly explaining thus: "Sir, if thee kindly allows me to pray with the women, I will go inside."

The Governor asked her to say it again. She did so, and a bright thought came to the great man: he would grant her request, writing an order that she be allowed to go inside the prison whenever she desired. It would teach her a lesson and save him from further importunity.

So little Mrs. Fry presented the order, and the gates were swung open and the iron quickly snapped behind her. She spoke to the women, addressing the one who seemed to be leader as sister, and asked the others to follow her back into the courtway away from the sound of the street, so they could have prayers. They followed dumbly. She knelt on the stone pavement and prayed in silence. Then she arose and read to them the One Hundred Seventh Psalm.

Again she prayed, asking the others to kneel with her. A dozen knelt. She arose and went her way amid a hush of solemn silence.

Next day, when she came again, the ribaldry ceased on her approach, and after the religious service she remained inside the walls an hour conversing with those who wished to talk with her, going to all the children that were sick and ministering to them.

In a week she called all together and proposed starting a school for the children. The mothers entered into the project gladly. A governess, imprisoned for theft, was elected teacher. A cell-room was cleaned out, whitewashed, and set apart for a schoolroom, with the permission of the Governor, who granted the request, explaining, however, that there was no precedent for such a thing. The school prospered, and outside the schoolroom door hungry-eyed women listened furtively for scraps of knowledge that might be tossed overboard.

Mrs. Fry next organized classes for these older children, gray-haired, bowed with sin—many of them. There were twelve in each class, and they elected a monitor from their numbers, agreeing to obey her. Mrs. Fry brought cloth from her husband's store, and the women were taught to sew. The Governor insisted that there was no precedent for it, and the guards on the walls said that every scrap of cloth would be stolen, but the guards were wrong.

The day was divided up into regular hours for work and recreation. Other good Quaker women from outside came in to help; and the taproom kept by a mercenary guard was done away with, and an order established that no spirituous



liquors should be brought into Newgate. The women agreed to keep away from the grating on the street, except when personal friends came; to cease begging; to quit gambling. They were given pay for their labor. A woman was asked for as turnkey, instead of a man. All guards were to be taken from the walls that overlooked the women's department. The women were to be given mats to sleep on, and blankets to cover them when the weather was cold. The Governor was astonished! He called a council of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen. They visited the prison, and found for the first time that order had come out of chaos at Newgate.

¶ Mrs. Fry's requests were granted, and this little woman awoke one morning to find herself famous.

From Newgate she turned her attention to other prisons; she traveled throughout England, Scotland and Ireland, visiting prisons and asylums. She became well feared by those in authority, for her firm and gentle glance went straight to every abuse. Often she was airily turned away by some official clothed in a little brief authority, but the man usually lived to know his mistake.

She was invited by the French Government to visit the prisons of Paris and write a report, giving suggestions as to what reforms should be made. She went to Belgium, Holland and Germany, being received by kings and queens and prime ministers—as costume, her plain gray dress always sufficing. She treated royalty and unfortunates alike—simply as equals. She kept constantly in her mind the thought that all men are sinners before God: there are no rich, no poor; no high, no low; no bond, no free. Conditions



are transient, and boldly did she say to the King of France that he should build prisons with the idea of reformation, not revenge, and with the thought ever before him that he himself or his children might occupy these cells—so vain are human ambitions. To Sir Robert Peel and his Cabinet she read the story concerning the gallows built by Haman. "Thee must not shut out the sky from the prisoner; thee must build no dark cells—thy children may occupy them," she said.

John Howard and others had sent a glimmering ray of truth through the fog of ignorance concerning insanity. The belief was growing that insane people were really not possessed of devils after all. Yet still, the cell system, straitjacket and handcuffs were in great demand. In no asylum were prisoners allowed to eat at tables. Food was given to each in tin basins, without spoons, knives or forks. Glass dishes and china plates were considered especially dangerous; they told of one man who in an insane fit had cut his throat with a plate, and of another who had swallowed a spoon.

¶ Visiting an asylum at Worcester, Mrs. Fry saw the inmates receive their tin dishes, and, crouched on the floor, eating like wild beasts. She asked the chief warden for permission to try an experiment. He dubiously granted it. With the help of several of the inmates she arranged a long table, covered it with spotless linen brought by herself, placed bouquets of wild flowers on the table, and set it as she did at her own home. Then she invited twenty of the patients to dinner. They came, and a clergyman, who was an inmate, was asked to say grace. All sat down, and the dinner

passed off as quietly and pleasantly as could be wished. ¶ And these were the reforms she strove for, and put into practical execution everywhere. She asked that the word asylum be dropped, and home or hospital used instead. In visiting asylums, by her presence she said to the troubled spirits, Peace, be still! For half a century she toiled with an increasing energy and a never-flagging animation. She passed out full of honors, beloved as woman was never yet loved—loved by the unfortunate, the deformed, the weak, the vicious. She worked for a present good, here and now, believing that we can reach the future only through the present. In penology nothing has been added to her philosophy, and we have as yet not nearly carried out her suggestions ❀ ❀

Generations will come and go, nations will rise, grow old, and die, kings and rulers will be forgotten, but by so long as love kisses the white lips of pain will men remember and revere the name of Elizabeth Fry, Friend of Humanity.







MARY LAMB

M A R Y L A M B





**H**ER education in youth was not much attended to, and she happily missed all the train of female garniture which passeth by the name of accomplishments. She was tumbled early, by accident or providence, into a spacious closet of good old English reading, without much selection or prohibition, and browsed at will upon that fair and wholesome pasturage. Had I twenty girls they should be brought up exactly in this fashion. I know not whether their chance in wedlock might not be diminished by it, but I can answer for it that it maketh (if worst comes to worst) most incomparable old maids.—“Essays of Elia.”



# M A R Y L A M B



SING the love of brother and sister. For he who tells the tale of Charles and Mary Lamb's life must tell of a love that was an uplift to this brother and sister in childhood, that sustained them in the desolation of disaster, and was a saving solace even when every hope seemed gone and reason veiled her face. This love caused the flowers of Springtime to bloom for them again and again, and attracted such a circle of admirers that, as we read the records of their lives, set forth in the letters they received and wrote, we forget poverty, forget calamity, and behold only the radiant, smiling faces of loving, trusting, trustful friends.

The mother of Charles and Mary Lamb was a woman of fine natural endowment, of spirit and of aspiration. She married a man much older than herself. We know but little about John Lamb; we know nothing of his ancestry. Neither do we care to. He was not good enough to attract, nor bad enough to be interesting. He called himself a scrivener, but in fact he was a valet. He was neutral salts; and I say this just after having read his son's amiable mention of him under the guise of "Lovel," and with full knowledge that "he danced

well, was a good judge of vintage, played the harpsichord, and recited poetry on occasion."

When a woman of spirit stands up before a priest and makes solemn promise to live with a man who plays the harpsichord and is a good judge of vintage, and to love him until either he or she dies, she sows the seeds of death and disorder. Of course, I know that men and women who make promises before priests know not at the time what they do; they find out afterwards.

And so they were married, were John Lamb and Elizabeth Field; and probably very soon thereafter Elizabeth had a premonition that this union only held in store a glittering blade of steel for her heart. For she grew ill and dispirited, and John found companionship at the alehouse, and came stumbling home asking what the devil was the reason his wife could n't meet him with a smile and a kiss and a' that, as a dutiful wife should!

Elizabeth began to live more and more within herself.

We often hear foolish men taunt women with inability to keep secrets ✱ But women who talk much often do keep secrets—there are nooks in their hearts where the sun never enters, and where those nearest them are never allowed to look. More lives are blasted by secrecy than by frankness—ay! a thousand times. Why should such a thing as a secret ever exist? 'Tis preposterous, and is proof positive of depravity. If you and I are to live together, my life must be open as the ether and all my thoughts be yours. If I keep back this and that, you will find it out some day and suspect, with reason, that I also keep back the other. Ananias and

Sapphira met death, not so much for simple untruthfulness as for keeping something back.

Elizabeth Lamb sought to protect herself against an unappreciative mate by secrecy (perhaps she had to), and the habit grew until she kept secrets as a business—she kept foolish little secrets. Did she get a letter from her aunt, she read it in suggestive silence and then put it in her pocket. If visitors called she never mentioned it, and when the children heard of it weeks afterward they marveled.

And so shy little Mary Lamb wondered what it was her mother kept locked up in the bottom drawer of the bureau, and Mary was told that children must not ask questions—little girls should be seen and not heard.

At night, Mary would dream of the things that were in that drawer, and sometimes great, big, black things would creep out through the keyhole and grow bigger and bigger until they filled the room so full that you could n't breathe, and then little Mary would cry aloud and scream, and her father would come with a strap that was kept on a nail behind the kitchen-door and teach her better than to wake everybody up in the middle of the night.

Yet Mary loved her mother, and sought in many ways to meet her wishes, and all the time her mother kept the bureau-drawer locked, and away somewhere on a high shelf was hidden all tenderness—all the gentle loving words and the caresses which children crave. ¶ And little Mary's life seemed full of troubles, and the world a grievous place where everybody misunderstands everybody else; and at nighttime she would often hide her face in the pillow and cry herself to

sleep. ¶ But when she was ten years of age a great joy came into her life—a baby brother came! And all the love in the little girl's heart was poured out for the puny baby boy. Babies are troublesome things, anyway, where folks are awful poor and where there are no servants and the mother is not so very strong. And so Mary became the baby's own little foster-mother, and she carried him about, and long before he could lisp a word she had told him all the hopes and secrets of her heart, and he cooed and laughed, and lying on the floor, kicked his heels in the air and treated hope and love and ambition alike.

I can not find that Mary ever went to school. She stayed at home and sewed, did housework, and took care of the baby. All her learning came by absorption. When the boy was three years old she taught him his letters, and did it so deftly and well that he used to declare he could always read—and this is as it should be. When seven years of age the boy was sent to the Blue-Coat School. This was brought about through the influence of Mr. Salt, for whom John Lamb worked. Mr. Salt was a Bencher, and be it known a Bencher in England is not exactly the same thing as a Bencher in America. Mr. Salt took quite a notion to little Mary Lamb, and once when she came to his office with her father's dinner, the honorable Bencher chucked her under the chin, said she was a fine little girl, and asked her if she liked to read. And when she answered, "Oh, yes, sir!" and then added, "If you please!" the Bencher laughed, and told her she was welcome to take any book in his library. And so we find she spent many happy hours in the great man's



library; and it was through her importunities that Mr. Salt got banty Charles the scholarship in Christ's Hospital School. ¶ Now the Blue-Coat boys are a curiosity to every sightseer in London—and have been for these hundred years and more. Their long-tailed blue coats, buckle-shoes, and absence of either hats or caps bring the Yankee up with a halt. To conduct an American around to the vicinity of Christ's Hospital and let him discover a "Blue-Coat" for himself is a sensation. The costume is exactly the same as that worn by Edward, "the Boy King," who founded the school; and these youngsters, like the birds, never grow old. You lean against the high iron fence, and looking through the bars watch the boys frolic and play, just as visitors looked in the Eighteenth Century; and I've never been by Christ's Hospital yet when curious people did not stand and stare. And one thing the Blue-Coats seem to prove, and that is that hats are quite superfluous.

One worthy man from Jamestown, New York, was so impressed by these hatless boys that he wrote a book proving that the wearing of hats was what has kept the race in bondage to ignorance all down the ages. By statistics he proved that the Blue-Coats had attained distinction quite out of ratio to their number, and cited Coleridge, Leigh Hunt, Charles Lamb and many others as proof. This man returned to Jamestown hatless, and had he not caught cold and been carried off by pneumonia, would have spread his hatless gospel, rendering the name of Knox the Hatter infamous, and causing the word "Derby" to be henceforth a byword and a hissing.

When little Charles Lamb tucked the tails of his long blue coat under his belt and played leap-frog in the school-yard every morning at ten minutes after 'leven, his sister, wan, yellow and dreamy, used to come and watch him through these selfsame iron bars. She would wave the corner of her rusty shawl in loving token, and he would answer back and would have lifted his hat if he had had one. When the bell rang and the boys went pellmell into the entry-way, Charles would linger and hold one hand above his head as the stone wall swallowed him, and the sister knowing that all was well would hasten back to her work in Little Queen Street, hard by, to wait for the morrow when she could come again. ¶ "Who is that girl always hanging 'round after you?" asked a tall, handsome boy, called Ajax, of little Charles Lamb ❀ ❀

"Wh' why, don't you know—that, wh' why that's my sister Mary!"

"How should I know when you have never introduced me!" loftily replied Ajax.

And so the next day, at ten minutes after 'leven, Charles and the mighty Ajax came down to the fence, and Charles had to call to Mary not to run away, and Charles introduced Ajax to Mary and they shook hands through the fence. And the next week Ajax, who was known in private life as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, called at the house in Little Queen Street where the Lambs lived, and they all had gin and water, and the elder Lamb played the harpsichord, a secondhand one that had been presented by Mr. Salt, and recited poetry, and Coleridge talked the elder Lamb under the table and

argued the entire party into silence. Coleridge was only seventeen then, but a man grown, and already took snuff like a courtier, tapping the lid of the box meditatively and flashing a conundrum the while on the admiring company.

¶ Mary kept about as close run of the Blue-Coat School as if she had been a Blue-Coat herself. Still, she felt it her duty to keep one lesson in advance of her brother, just to know that he was progressing well.

He continued to go to school until he was fourteen, when he was set to work in the South Sea Company's office, because his income was needed to keep the family. Mary was educating the boy with the help of Mr. Salt's library, for a boy as fine as Charles must be educated, you know. By and by the bubble burst, and young Lamb was transferred to the East India Company's office, and being promoted was making nearly a hundred pounds a year.

And Mary sewed and borrowed books and toiled incessantly, but was ill at times. People said her head was not just right—she was overworked and nervous or something! The father had lost his place on account of too much gin and water, especially gin; the mother was almost helpless from paralysis, and in the family was an aged maiden aunt to be cared for. The only regular income was the salary of Charles. There they lived in their poverty and lowliness, hoping for better things!

Charles was working away over the ledgers, and used to come home fagged and weary, and Coleridge was far away, and there was no boy to educate now, and only sick and foolish and quibbling people on whom to strike fire. The

demnition grind did its work for Mary Lamb as surely as it is today doing it for countless farmers' wives in Iowa and Illinois ❁ ❁

Thus ran the years away.

Mary Lamb, aged thirty-two, gentle, intelligent and wondrous kind, in sudden frenzy seized a knife from the table and with one thrust sank the blade into her mother's heart. Charles Lamb, in an adjoining room, hearing the commotion, entered quickly and taking the knife from his sister's hand, put his arm about her and tenderly led her away.

Returning in a few moments, the mother was dead.

Women often make a shrill outcry at sight of a mouse; men curse roundly when large, buzzing, bluebottle flies disturb their after-dinner nap; but let occasion come and the stuff of which heroes are made is in us all. I think well of my kind.

¶ Charles Lamb made no outcry, he shed no tears, he spoke no word of reproach. He met each detail of that terrible issue as coolly, calmly and surely as if he had been making entries in his journal. No man ever loved his mother more, but she was dead now—she was dead. He closed the staring eyes, composed the stiffening limbs, kept curious sightseers at bay, and all the time thought of what he could do to protect the living—she who had wrought this ruin.

Charles was twenty-one—a boy in feeling and temperament, a frolicsome, heedless boy. In an hour he had become a man.

It requires a subtler pen than mine to trace the psychology of this tragedy; but let me say thus much, it had its birth in love, in unrequited love; and the outcome of it was an

increase of love. ¶ O God! how wonderful are Thy works!  
Thou makest the rotting log to nourish banks of violets,  
and from the stagnant pool at Thy word springs forth  
the lotus that covers all with fragrance and beauty!



**C**OLERIDGE in his youth was brilliant—no one disputes that. He dazzled Charles and Mary Lamb from the very first. Even when a Blue-Coat he could turn a pretty quatrain, and when he went away to Cambridge and once in a long while wrote a letter down to "My Own C. L.," it was a feast for the sister, too. Mary was different from other girls: she did n't "have company," she was too honest and serious and earnest for society—her ideals too high. Coleridge—handsome, witty, philosophic Coleridge—was her ideal. She loved him from afar.

How vain it is to ponder in our minds the what-might-have-been! Yet how can we help wondering what would have been the result had Coleridge wedded Mary Lamb! In many ways it seems it would have been an ideal mating, for Mary Lamb's mental dowry made good Coleridge's every deficiency, and his merits equalized all that she lacked. He was sprightly, headstrong, erratic, emotional; she was equally keen-witted, but a conservative in her cast of mind. That she was capable of a great and passionate love there is no doubt, and he might have been. Mary Lamb would have been his anchor to win'ard, but as it was he drifted straight onto the rocks. Her mental troubles came from a lack of responsibility—a rusting away of unused powers in a dull, monotonous round of commonplace. Had her heart found its home I can not conceive of her in any other light than as a splendid, earnest woman—sane, well-poised, and doing a work that only the strong can do. Coleridge has left on record the statement that she was the only woman he ever met who had a "logical mind"—that is to say, the only woman who ever understood



him when he talked his best. ¶ Coleridge made progress at the Blue-Coat School: he became "Deputy Grecian," or head scholar. This secured him a scholarship at Cambridge, and thither he went in search of honors. But his revolutionary and Unitarian principles did not serve him in good stead, and he was placed under the ban.

At the same time a youth by the name of Robert Southey was having a like experience at Oxford. Other youths had tried in days agoone to shake Cambridge and Oxford out of their conservatism, and the result was that the embryo revolutionists speedily found themselves warned off the campus. So through sympathy Coleridge and Southey met. Coleridge also brought along a young philosopher and poet, who had also been a Blue-Coat, by the name of Lovell.

These three young men talked philosophy, and came to the conclusion that the world was wrong. They said society was founded on a false hypothesis—they would better things. And so they planned packing up and away to America to found an Ideal Community on the banks of the Susquehanna. But hold! a society without women is founded on a false hypothesis—that's so—what to do? Now in America there are no women but Indian squaws.

But resource did not fail them—Southey thought of the Fricker family, a mile out on the Bristol road. There were three fine, strong, intelligent girls—what better than to marry 'em? The world should be peopled from the best. The girls were consulted and found willing to reorganize society on the communal basis, and so the three poets married the three sisters—more properly, each of the three poets

married a sister. "Thank God," said Lamb, "that there were not four of those Fricker girls, or I, too, would have been bagged, and the world peopled from the best!"

Southey got the only prize out of the hazard; Lovell's wife was so-so, and Coleridge drew a blank, or thought he did, which was the same thing; for as a man thinketh so is she. The thought of a lifetime on the banks of the Susquehanna with a woman who was simply pink and good, and who was never roused into animation even by his wildest poetic bursts, took all ambition out of him.

Funds were low and the emigration scheme was temporarily pigeonholed. After a short time Coleridge declared his mind was getting mildewed and packed off to London for mental oxygen and a little visit, leaving his wife in Southey's charge ❀ ❀

He was gone two years.

Lovell soon followed suit, and Southey had three sisters in his household, all with babies.

In the meantime we find Southey installed at "Greta," just outside of the interesting town of Keswick, where the water comes down at Lodore. Southey was a general: he knew that knowledge consists in having a clerk who can find the thing. He laid out research work and literary schemes enough for several lifetimes, and the three sisters were hard at it. It was a little community of their own—all working for Southey, and glad of it. Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy lived at Grasmere, thirteen miles away, and they used to visit back and forth. When you go to Keswick you should tramp that thirteen miles—the man who has n't tramped

from Keswick to Grasmere has dropped something out of his life. In merry jest, tipped with acid, some one called them "The Lake Poets," as if there were poets and lake poets. And Lamb was spoken of as "a Lake Poet by grace." Literary London grinned, as we do when some one speaks of the Sweet Singer of Michigan or the Chicago Muse. But the term of contempt stuck and, like the words Methodist, Quaker and Philistine, soon ceased to be a term of reproach and became something of which to be proud.

There is a lead-pencil factory at Keswick, established in the year Eighteen Hundred. Pencils are made there today exactly as they were made then, and when you see the factory you are willing to believe it. All visitors at Keswick go to the pencil-factory and buy pencils, such as Southey used, and get their names stamped on each pencil while they wait, without extra charge. On the wall is a silhouette picture of Southey, showing a needlessly large nose, and the gentlemanly old proprietor will tell you that Dorothy Wordsworth made the picture; and then he will show you a letter written by Charles Lamb, framed under glass, wherein C. L. says all pencils are fairish good, but no pencils are so good as Keswick pencils.

For a while, when times were hard, Coleridge's wife worked here making pencils, while her archangel husband (a little damaged) went with Wordsworth to study metaphysics at Gottingen. When Coleridge came back and heard what his wife had done, he reproved her—gently but firmly. Mrs. Ajax in a pencil-factory wearing a check apron with a bib!—huh!!

Southey had concluded that if Coleridge and Lovell were good samples of socialism he would stick to individualism. So he joined the Church of England, became a Monarchist, sang the praises of royalty, got a pension, became Poet Laureate, and rich—passing rich.

“Wh-wh-when he secured for himself the services of three good women he made a wise move,” said C. L.

And all the time Coleridge and Lamb were in correspondence; and when Coleridge was in London he kept close run of the Lambs. The father and old aunt had passed out, and Charles and Mary lived together in rooms. They seemed to have moved very often—their record followed them. When the other tenants heard that “she’s the one that killed her mother,” they ceased to let their children play in the hallways, and the landlord apologized, coughed, and raised the rent. Poor Charles saw the point and did not argue it. He looked for other lodgings and having found ’em went home and said to Mary, “It’s too noisy here, Sister—I can’t stand it—we’ll have to go!”

Charles was a literary man now: a bookkeeper by day and a literary man by night. He wrote to please his sister, and all his jokes were for her. There is a genuine vein of pathos in all true humor, but think of the fear and the love and the tenderness that are concealed in Charles Lamb’s work that was designed only to fight off dread calamity! And Mary copied and read and revised for her brother, and he told it all to her before he wrote it, and together they discussed it in detail. Charles studied mathematics, just to keep his genius under, he declared. Mary smiled and said it was n’t necessary.

¶ Coleridge used to drop in, and the Stoddarts, Hazlitts, Godwin and Lovell, too. Then Southey was up in London and he called and so did Wordsworth and Dorothy, for Coleridge had spread Lamb's fame. And Dorothy and Mary kissed each other and held hands under the table, and when Dorothy went back to Grasmere she wrote many beautiful letters to Mary and urged her to come and visit her—yes, come to Grasmere and live. The one point they held in common was a love for Coleridge; and as he belonged to neither there was no room for jealousy. The Fricker girls were all safely married, but Charles and Mary could not think of going—they needs must hide in a big city. "I hate your damned throstles and larks and bobolinks," said C. L., in feigned contempt. "I sing the praises of the 'Salutation and the Cat' and a snug fourth-floor back."

They could not leave London, for over them ever hung that black cloud of a mind diseased.

"I can do nothing—think nothing. Mary has another of her bad spells—we saw it coming, and I took her away to a place of safety," writes Charles to Coleridge.

One writer tells of seeing Charles and Mary walking across Hampstead Heath, hand in hand, both crying. They were on the way to the asylum.

Fortunately these "illnesses" gave warning and Charles would ask his employer leave for a "holiday," and stay at home trying by gentle mirth and work to divert the dread visitor of unreason.

After each illness, in a few weeks the sister would be restored to her own, very weak and her mind a blank as to what had



gone before. And so she never remembered that supreme calamity. She knew the deed had been done, but Heaven had absolved her gentle spirit from all participation in it. She often talked of her mother, wrote of her, quoted her, and that they should sometime be again united was her firm faith.

The "Tales From Shakespeare" was written at the suggestion of Godwin, seconded by Charles. The idea that she herself could write seemed never to have occurred to Mary, until Charles swore with a needless oath that all the ideas he ever had she supplied.

"Charles, dear, you've been drinking again!" said Mary. But the "Tales" sold and sold well; fame came that way and more money than the simple, plain, homekeeping bodies needed. So they started a pension-roll for sundry old ladies, and to themselves played high and mighty patron, and figured and talked and joked over the blue teacups as to what they should do with their money—five hundred pounds a year! Goodness gracious, if the Bank of England gets in a pinch advise C. L., at Thirty-four Southampton Buildings, third floor, second turning to the left but one.

A Mrs. Reynolds was one of the pensioners, but no one knew it but Mrs. Reynolds, and she never told. She was a Lady of the Old School, and used often to dine with the Lambs and get her snuffbox filled. Her husband had been a ship-captain or something, and when the tea was strong she would take snuff and tell the visitors about him and swear she had ever been true to his memory, though God knows all good-looking and clever widows are sorely tried in this



scurvy world! ♣ Mrs. Reynolds met Thomas Hood at a "Saturday Evening" at the Lambs', and he was so taken with her that he has told us "she looked like an elderly wax doll in half mourning, and when she spoke it was as if by an artificial process; she always kept up the gurgle and buzz until run down."

Mrs. Reynolds' sole claim to literary distinction was the fact that she had known Goldsmith and he had presented her with an inscribed copy of "The Deserted Village."

But we all have a tender place in our hearts for the elderly wax doll because the Lambs were so gentle and patient with her, and once a year went to Highgate and put a shilling vase of flowers over the grave of the Captain to whose memory she was ever true.

These friendless old souls used to meet and mix at the Lambs' with those whose names are now deathless. You can not write the history of English Letters and leave the Lambs out. They were the loved and loving friends of Southey, Wordsworth, Coleridge, De Quincey, Jeffries and Godwin. They won the recognition of all who prize the far-reaching intellect—the subtle imagination. The pathos and tenderness of their lives entwine us with tendrils that hold our hearts in thrall ♣ ♣

They adopted a little girl, a beautiful little girl by the name of Emma Isola. And never was there child that was a greater joy to parents than was Emma Isola to Charles and Mary. The wonder is they did not spoil her with admiration, and by laughing at all her foolish little pranks. Mary set herself the task of educating this little girl, and formed a class the

better to do it—a class of three: Emma Isola, William Hazlitt's son and Mary Victoria Novello. I met Mary Victoria once; she's over eighty years of age now. Her form is a little bent, but her eye is bright and her smile is the smile of youth. Folks call her Mary Cowden-Clarke.

And I want you to remember, dearie, that it was Mary Lamb who introduced the other Mary to Shakespeare, by reading to her the MS. of the "Tales." And further, that it was the success of the "Tales" that fired Mary Cowden-Clarke with an ambition also to do a great Shakespearian work. There may be a question about the propriety of calling the "Tales" a great work—their simplicity seems to forbid it—but the term is all right when applied to that splendid life-achievement, the "Concordance," of which Mary Lamb was the grandmother ❧ ❧

Emma Isola married Edward Moxon, and the Moxon home was the home of Mary Lamb whenever she wished to make it so, to the day of her death. The Moxons did good by stealth, and were glad they never awoke and found it fame.

"What shall I do when Mary leaves me, never to return?" once said Charles to Manning. But Mary lived for full twenty years after Charles had gone, and lived only in loving memory of him who had devoted his life to her. She seemed to exist just to talk of him and to garland the grave in the little old churchyard at Edmonton, where he sleeps. Wordsworth says, "A grave is a tranquillizing object: resignation in time springs up from it as naturally as wild flowers bespread the turf." Her work was to look after the "pensioners" and carry out the wishes of "my brother Charles."

But the pensioners were laid away to rest, one after the other, and the gentle Mary, grown old and feeble, became a pensioner too, but, thanks to that divine humanity that is found in English hearts, she never knew it. To the last, she looked after "the worthy poor," and carried flowers once a year to the grave of the gallant Captain Reynolds at Highgate, and never tired of sounding the praises of Charles and excusing the foibles of Coleridge. She lived only in the past and its loving memories were more than a ballast 'gainst the ills of the present.

And so she went down into the valley and entered the great shadow, telling in cheerful, broken musings of a brother's love ❧ ❧

And then she was carried to the churchyard at Edmonton. There she rests in the grave with her brother. In life they were never separated, and in death they are not divided.









JANE AUSTEN



J A N E      A U S T E N



**D**ELAFORD is a nice place I can tell you; exactly what I call a nice, old-fashioned place, full of comforts, quite shut in with great garden-walls that are covered with fruit-trees, and such a mulberry-tree in the corner. Then there is a dovecote, some delightful fish-ponds, and a very pretty canal, and everything, in short, that one could wish for; and moreover it's close to the church and only a quarter of a mile from the turnpike road.—“Sense and Sensibility.”



# JANE AUSTEN



T was at Cambridge, England, I met him—a fine, intelligent clergyman he was, too.

“He’s not a ‘Varsity man,” said my new acquaintance, speaking of Doctor Joseph Parker, the world’s greatest preacher ❀

“If he were, he would n’t do all these preposterous things, you know.”

“He’s a little like Henry Irving,” I ventured apologetically.

“True, and what absurd mannerisms—did you ever see the like! Yes, one’s from Yorkshire and the other from Cornwall, and both are Philistines.”

He laughed at his joke and so did I, for I always try to be polite.

So I went my way, and as I strolled it came to me that my clerical friend was right—a university course might have taken all the individuality out of these strong men and made of their genius a purely neutral decoction ❀ ❀

And when I thought further and considered how much learning has done to banish wisdom, it was a satisfaction to remember that Shakespeare at Oxford did nothing beyond making the acquaintance of an innkeeper’s wife.

It hardly seems possible that a Harvard degree would have made a stronger man

of Abraham Lincoln; or that Edison, whose brain has wrought greater changes than that of any other man of the century, was the loser by not being versed in physics as taught at Yale.

The Law of Compensation never rests, and the men who are taught too much from books are not taught by Deity. Most education in the past has failed to awaken in its subject a degree of intellectual consciousness. It is the education that the Jesuits served out to the Indian & It made him peaceable, but took all dignity out of him. From a noble red man he descended into a dirty Injun, who signed away his heritage for rum.

The world's plan of education has mostly been priestly—we have striven to inculcate trust and reverence. We have cited authorities and quoted precedents and given examples: it was a matter of memory; while all the time the whole spiritual acreage was left untilled.

A race educated in this way never advances, save as it is jolted out of its notions by men with either a sublime ignorance of, or an indifference to, what has been done and said. These men are always called barbarians by their contemporaries: they are jeered and hooted. They supply much mirth by their eccentricities. After they are dead the world sometimes canonizes them and carves on their tombs the word "Savior."

Do I then plead the cause of ignorance? Well, yes, rather so. A little ignorance is not a dangerous thing. A man who reads too much—who accumulates too many facts—gets his mind filled to the point of saturation; matters then crystallize



and his head becomes a solid thing that refuses to let anything either in or out. In his soul there is no guest-chamber. His only hope for progress lies in another incarnation.

And so a certain ignorance seems a necessary equipment for the doing of a great work. To live in a big city and know what others are doing and saying; to meet the learned and powerful, and hear their sermons and lectures; to view the unending shelves of vast libraries is to be discouraged at the start. And thus we find that genius is essentially rural—a country product. Salons, soirees, theaters, concerts, lectures, libraries, produce a fine mediocrity that smiles at the right time and bows when 't is proper, but it is well to bear in mind that George Eliot, Elizabeth Barrett, Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen were all country girls, with little companionship, nourished on picked-up classics, having a healthy ignorance of what the world was saying and doing.



JANE AUSTEN lived a hundred years ago. But when you tramp that five miles from Overton, where the railroad-station is, to Steventon, where she was born, it does n't seem like it. Rural England does not change much. Great fleecy clouds roll lazily across the blue, overhead, and the hedgerows are full of twittering birds that you hear but seldom see; and the pastures contain mild-faced cows that look at you with wide-open eyes over the stone walls; and in the towering elm-trees that sway their branches in the breeze crows hold a noisy caucus. And it comes to you that the clouds and the blue sky and the hedgerows and the birds and the cows and the crows are all just as Jane Austen knew them—no change. These stone walls stood here then, and so did the low slate-roofed barns and the whitewashed cottages where the roses clamber over the doors.

I paused in front of one of these snug, homely, handsome, pretty little cottages and looked at the two exact rows of flowers that lined the little walk leading from gate to cottage-door. The pathway was made from coal-ashes and the flower-beds were marked off with pieces of broken crockery set on edge. 'T was an absent-minded, impolite thing to do—to stand leaning on a gate and critically examine the landscape gardening, evidently an overworked woman's gardening, at that ❀ ❀

As I leaned there the door opened and a little woman with sleeves rolled up appeared. I mumbled an apology, but before I could articulate it she held out a pair of scissors and said, "Perhaps, sir, you 'd like to clip some of the flowers—the roses over the door are best!"

Three children hung to her skirts, peeking 'round faces from behind, and quite accidentally disclosing a very neat ankle ❧ ❧

I took the scissors and clipped three splendid Jacqueminots and said it was a beautiful day. She agreed with me and added that she was just finishing her churning and if I'd wait a minute until the butter came, she'd give me a drink of buttermilk.

I waited without urging and got the buttermilk, and as the children had come out from hiding I was minded to give them a penny apiece. Two coppers were all I could muster, so I gave the two boys each a penny and the little girl a shilling. The mother protested that she had no change and that a bob was too much for a little girl like that, but I assumed a Big-Bonanza air and explained that I was from California where the smallest change is a dollar.

"Go thank the gentleman, Jane."

"That's right, Jane Austen, come here and thank me!"

¶ "How did you know her name was Jane Austen—Jane Austen Humphreys?"

"I did n't know—I only guessed."

Then little Mrs. Humphreys ceased patting the butter and told me that she named her baby girl for Jane Austen, who used to live near here a long time ago. Jane Austen was one of the greatest writers that ever lived—the Rector said so. The Reverend George Austen preached at Steventon for years and years, and I should go and see the church—the same church where he preached and where Jane Austen used to go. And anything I wanted to know about Jane

Austen's books the Rector could tell, for he was a wonderful learned man was the Rector—"Kiss the gentleman, Jane."

¶ So I kissed Jane Austen's round, rosy cheek and stroked the tousled heads of the two boys by way of blessing, and started for Steventon to interview the Rector who was very wise \* \*

And the clergyman who teaches his people the history of their neighborhood, and tells them of the excellent men and women who once lived thereabouts, is both wise and good. And the present Rector at Steventon is both—I'm sure of that.



**I**T was a very happy family that lived in the Rectory at Steventon from Seventeen Hundred Seventy-five to Eighteen Hundred One. There were five boys and two girls, and the younger girl's name was Jane. Between her and James, the oldest boy, lay a period of twelve years of three hundred and sixty-five days each, not to mention leap-years ❖ ❖

The boys were sent away to be educated, and when they came home at holiday time they brought presents for the mother and the girls, and there was great rejoicing.

James was sent to Oxford. The girls were not sent away to be educated—it was thought hardly worth while then to educate women, and some folks still hold to that belief. When the boys came home, they were made to stand by the door-jamb, and a mark was placed on the casing, with a date, which showed how much they had grown. And they were catechized as to their knowledge, and cross-questioned and their books inspected; and so we find one of the sisters saying, once, that she knew all the things her brothers knew, and besides that she knew all the things she knew herself.

¶ There was plenty of books in the library, and the girls made use of them. They would read to their father “because his eyesight was bad,” but I can not help thinking this a clever ruse on the part of the good Rector.

I do not find that there were any secrets in that household, or that either Mr. or Mrs. Austen ever said that children should be seen and not heard. It was a little republic of letters—all their own. Thrown in on themselves, for not many of the yeomanry thereabouts could read, there was

developed a fine spirit of comradeship among parents and children, brothers and sisters, servants and visitors, that is a joy to contemplate. Before the days of railroads, a "visitor" was more of an institution than he is now. He stayed longer and was more welcome; and the news he brought from distant parts was eagerly asked for. Nowadays we know all about everything, almost before it happens, for yellow journalism is so alert that it discounts futurity.

In the Austen household had lived and died a son of Warren Hastings. The lad had so won the love of the Austens that they even spoke of him as their own; and this bond also linked them to the great outside world of statecraft. The things the elders discussed were the properties, too, of the children ❀ ❀

Then once a year the Bishop came—came in knee-breeches, hobnailed shoes, and shovel hat, and the little church was decked with greens. The Bishop came from Paradise, little Jane used to think, and once, to be polite, she asked him how all the folks were in Heaven. Then the other children giggled and the Bishop spilt a whole cup of tea down the front of his best coat, and coughed and choked until he was very red in the face.

When Jane was ten years old there came to live at the Rectory a daughter of Mrs. Austen's sister. She came to them direct from France. Her name was Madame Fenillade. She was a widow and only twenty-two. Once, when little Jane overheard one of the brothers say that Monsieur Fenillade had kissed Mademoiselle Guillotine, she asked what he meant and they would not tell her.



Now Madame spoke French with grace and fluency, and the girls thought it queer that there should be two languages—English and French—so they picked up a few words of French, too, and at the table would gravely say “*Merci, Papa,*” and “*S’il vous plait, Mamma.*” Then Mr. Austen proposed that at table no one should speak anything but French. So Madame told them what to call the sugar and the salt and the bread, and no one called anything except by its French name. In two weeks each of the whole dozen persons who sat at that board, as well as the girl who waited on table, had a bill-of-fare working capital of French. In six months they could converse with ease.

And science with all its ingenuity has not yet pointed out a better way for acquiring a new language than the plan the Austens adopted at Steventon Rectory ♫ We call it the “Berlitz Method” now.

Madame Fenillade’s widowhood rested lightly upon her, and she became quite the life of the whole household.

One of the Austen boys fell in love with the French widow; and surely it would be a very stupid country boy that would n’t love a French widow like that!

And they were married and lived happily ever afterward.

¶ But before Madame married and moved away she taught the girls charades, and then little plays, and a theatrical performance was given in the barn. ¶ Then a play could not be found that just suited, so Jane wrote one and Cassandra helped, and Madame criticized and the Reverend Mr. Austen suggested a few changes. Then it was all rewritten. And this was the first attempt at writing for the public by Jane Austen.

JANE AUSTEN wrote four great novels. "Pride and Prejudice" was begun when she was twenty and finished a year later. The old father started a course of novel-reading on his own account in order to fit his mind to pass judgment on his daughter's work. He was sure it was good, but feared that love had blinded his eyes, and he wanted to make sure. After six months' comparison he wrote to a publisher explaining that he had the MS. of a great novel that would be parted with for a consideration. He assured the publisher that the novel was as excellent as any Miss Burney, Miss Edgeworth, or any one else ever wrote ❀ ❀

Now publishers get letters like that by every mail, and when Mr. Austen received his reply it was so antarctic in sentiment that the MS. was stored away in the garret, where it lay for just eleven years before it found a publisher. But in the meantime Miss Austen had written three other novels—not with much hope that any one would publish them, but to please her father and the few intimate friends who read and sighed and smiled in quiet.

The year she was thirty years of age her father died—died with no thought that the world would yet endorse his own loving estimate of his daughter's worth.

After the father's death financial troubles came, and something had to be done to fight off possible hungry wolves. The MS. was hunted out, dusted, gone over, and submitted to publishers. They sniffed at it and sent it back. Finally a man was found who was bold enough to read. He liked it, but would n't admit the fact. Yet he decided to print it. He

did so. The reading world liked it and said so, although not very loudly. Slowly the work made head, and small-sized London drafts were occasionally sent by publishers to Miss Austen with apologies because the amounts were not larger.

¶ Now, in reference to writing books it may not be amiss to explain that no one ever said, "Now then, I'll write a story!" and sitting down at table took up pen and dipping it in ink, wrote. Stories don't come that way. Stories take possession of one—incident after incident—and you write in order to get rid of 'em—with a few other reasons mixed in, for motives, like silver, are always found mixed. Children play at keeping house: and men and women who have loved think of the things that have happened, then imagine all the things that might have happened, and from thinking it all over to writing it out is but a step. You begin one chapter and write it this forenoon; and do all you may to banish the plot, the next chapter is all in your head before sundown. Next morning you write chapter number two, to unload it, and so the story spins itself out into a book. All this if you live in the country and have time to think and are not broken in upon by too much work and worry—save the worry of the ever-restless mind. Whether the story is good or not depends upon what you leave out.

The sculptor produces the beautiful statue by chipping away such parts of the marble block as are not needed.

¶ Really happy people do not write stories—they accumulate adipose tissue and die at the top through fatty degeneration of the cerebrum. A certain disappointment in life, a dissatisfaction with environment, is necessary

to stir the imagination to a creative point. If things are all to your taste you sit back and enjoy them. You forget the flight of time, the march of the seasons, your future life, family, country—all, just as Antony did in Egypt. A deadly, languorous satisfaction comes over you ✱ Pain, disappointment, unrest or a joy that hurts, are the things that prick the mind into activity.

Jane Austen lived in a little village. She felt the narrowness of her life—the inability of those beyond her own household to match her thoughts and emotions. Love came that way—a short heart-rest, a being understood, were hers. The gates of Paradise swung ajar and she caught a glimpse of the glories within, and sighed and clasped her hands and bowed her head in a prayer of thankfulness.

When she arose from her knees the gates were closed; the way was dark; she was alone—alone in a little quibbling, carping village, where tired folks worked and gossiped, ate, drank, slept. Her home was pleasant, to be sure, but man is a citizen of the world, not of a house.

Jane Austen began to write—to write about these village people. Jane was tall, and twenty—not very handsome, but better, she was good-looking. She looked good because she was. She was pious, but not too pious. She used to go calling among the parishioners, visiting the sick, the lowly, the troubled ✱ Then when Great Folks came down from London to “the Hall,” she went with the Rector to call on them too, for the Rector was servant to all—his business was to minister: he was a Minister. And the Reverend George Austen was a bit proud of his younger daughter. She was

just as tall as he, and dignified and gentle : and the clergyman chuckled quietly to himself to see how she was the equal in grace and intellect of any Fine Lady from Londontown.

And although the good Rector prayed, "From all vanity and pride of spirit, good Lord, deliver us," it never occurred to him that he was vain of his tall daughter Jane, and I 'm glad it did n't. There is no more crazy bumblebee gets into a mortal's bonnet than the buzzing thought that God is jealous of the affection we have for our loved ones. If we are ever damned, it will be because we have too little love for our fellows, not too much.

But, egad ! brother, it 's no small delight to be sixty and a little stooped and a trifle rheumatic, and have your own blessed daughter, sweet and stately, comb your thinning gray locks, help you on with your overcoat, find your cane, and go trooping with you, hand in hand, down the lane on merciful errand bent. It 's a temptation to grow old and feign sciatica ; and if you could only know that, some day, like old King Lear, upon your withered cheek would fall Cordelia's tears, the thought would be a solace.

So Jane Austen began to write stories about the simple folks she knew. She wrote in the family sitting-room at a little mahogany desk that she could shut up quickly if prying neighbors came in to tell their woes and ask questions about all those sheets of paper ! And all she wrote she read to her father and to her sister Cassandra.

And they talked it all over together and laughed and cried and joked over it. The kind old minister thought it a good mental drill for his girls to write and express their feelings.



The two girls collaborated—that is to say, one wrote and the other looked on. Neither girl had been “educated,” except what their father taught them. But to be born into a bookish family, and inherit the hospitable mind and the receptive heart, is better than to be sent to Harvard Annex. Preachers, like other folks, sometimes assume a virtue when they have it not. But George Austen did n’t pretend—he was. And that ’s the better plan, for no man can deceive his children—they take his exact measurement, whether others ever do or not; and the only way to win and hold the love of a child (or a grown-up) is to be frank and simple and honest. I ’ve tried both schemes.

I can not find that George Austen ever claimed he was only a worm of the dust, or pretended to be more or less than he was, or to assume a knowledge that he did not possess. He used to say, “My dears, I really do not know. But let ’s keep the windows open and light may yet come.”

It was a busy family of plain average people—not very rich, and not very poor. There were difficulties to meet, and troubles to share, and joys to divide.

Jane Austen was born in Seventeen Hundred Seventy-five; “Jane Eyre” in Eighteen Hundred Sixteen—one year before Jane Austen died.

Charlotte Bronte knew all about Jane Austen, and her example fired Charlotte’s ambition. Both were daughters of country clergymen ✱ Charlotte lived in the North of England on the wild and treeless moors, where the searching winds rattled the panes and black-faced sheep bleated piteously. Jane Austen lived in the rich quiet of a prosperous

farming country, where bees made honey and larks nested. The Reverend Patrick Bronte disciplined his children: George Austen loved his. In Steventon there is no "Black Bull"; only a little dehorned inn, kept by a woman who breeds canaries, and will sell you a warranted singer for five shillings, with no charge for the cage. At Steventon no red-haired Yorkshiremen offer to give fight or challenge you to a drinking-bout.

The opposites of things are alike, and that is why the world ties Jane Eyre and Jane Austen in one bundle. Their methods of work were totally different: their effects gotten in different ways. Charlotte Bronte fascinates by startling situations and highly colored lights that dance and glow, leading you on in a mad chase. There's pain, unrest, tragedy in the air. The pulse always is rapid and the temperature high.

It is not so with Jane Austen. She is an artist in her gentleness, and the world is today recognizing this more and more. The stage now works its spells by her methods—without rant, cant or fustian—and as the years go by this must be so more and more, for mankind's face is turned toward truth.

¶ To weave your spell out of commonplace events and brew a love-potion from every-day materials is high art. When Kipling takes three average soldiers of the line, ignorant, lying, swearing, smoking, dog-fighting soldiers, who can even run on occasion, and by telling of them holds a world in thrall—that's art! In these soldiers three we recognize something very much akin to ourselves, for the thing that holds no relationship to us does not interest us—we can not leave the personal equation out. This fact



is made plain in "The Black Riders," where the devils dancing in Tophet look up and espying Steve Crane, address him thus: "Brother!"

Jane Austen's characters are all plain, every-day folks. The work is always quiet. There are no entangling situations, no mysteries, no surprises.

Now, to present a situation, an emotion, so it will catch and hold the attention of others, is largely a knack—you practise on the thing until you do it well. This one thing I do. But the man who does this thing is not intrinsically any greater than those who appreciate it—in fact, they are all made of the same kind of stuff. Kipling himself is quite a commonplace person. He is neither handsome nor magnetic. He is plain and manly and would fit in anywhere. If there was a trunk to be carried upstairs, or an ox to get out of a pit, you'd call on Kipling if he chanced that way, and he'd give you a lift as a matter of course, and then go on whistling with hands in his pockets. His art is a knack practised to a point that gives facility.

¶ Jane Austen was a commonplace person. She swept, sewed, worked, and did the duty that lay nearest her. She wrote because she liked to, and because it gave pleasure to others. She wrote as well as she could. She had no thought of immortality, or that she was writing for the ages—no more than Shakespeare had. She never anticipated that Southey, Coleridge, Lamb, Guizot and Macaulay would hail her as a marvel of insight, nor did she suspect that a woman as great as George Eliot would declare her work flawless ❀ ❀

But today strong men recognize her books as rarely excellent, because they show the divinity in all things, keep close to the ground, gently inculcate the firm belief that simple people are as necessary as great ones, that small things are not necessarily unimportant, and that nothing is really insignificant. It all rings true.

And so I sing the praises of the average woman—the woman who does her work, who is willing to be unknown, who is modest and unaffected, who tries to lessen the pains of earth, and to add to its happiness. She is the true guardian angel of mankind!

No book published in Jane Austen's lifetime bore her name on the title-page; she was never lionized by society; she was never two hundred miles from home; she died when forty-two years of age, and it was sixty years before a biography was attempted or asked for. She sleeps in the cathedral at Winchester, and not so very long ago a visitor, on asking the verger to see her grave, was conducted thither, and the verger asked, "Was she anybody in particular? So many folks ask where she 's buried, you know!"

But this is changed now, for when the verger took me to her grave and we stood by that plain, black, marble slab, he spoke intelligently of her life and work. And many visitors now go to the cathedral, only because it is the resting-place of Jane Austen, who lived a beautiful, helpful life and produced great art, yet knew it not.









EMPRESS JOSEPHINE

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**Y**OU have met General Bonaparte in my house. Well—he it is who would supply a father's place to the orphans of Alexander de Beauharnais, and a husband's to his widow. I admire the General's courage, the extent of his information, for on all subjects he talks equally well, and the quickness of his judgment, which enables him to seize the thoughts of others almost before they are expressed; but, I confess it, I shrink from the despotism he seems desirous of exercising over all who approach him. His searching glance has something singular and inexplicable, which imposes even on our Directors; judge if it may not intimidate a woman. Even—what ought to please me—the force of a passion, described with an energy that leaves not a doubt of his sincerity, is precisely the cause which arrests the consent I am often on the point of pronouncing.

—“Letters of Josephine.”



# EMPRESS JOSEPHINE



T was a great life, dearie, a great life! Charles Lamb used to study mathematics to subdue his genius, and I'll have to tinge truth with gray in order to keep this little sketch from appearing like a red Ruritania romance.

Josephine was born on an island in the Caribbean Sea, a long way from France. The Little Man was an islander, too. They started for France about the same time, from different directions—each, of course, totally unaware that the other lived. They started on the order of that joker Fate, in order to scramble Continental politics, and make omelet of the world's pretensions.

¶ Josephine's father was Captain Tascher. Do you know who Captain Tascher was? Very well, there is satisfaction then in knowing that no one else does either. He seems to have had no ancestors; and he left no successor save Josephine.

¶ We know a little less of Josephine's mother than we do of her father. She was the daughter of a Frenchman whom the world had plucked of both money and courage, and he moved to the West Indies to vegetate and brood on the vanity of earthly ambitions. Young Captain Tascher married the planter's daughter in the year

Seventeen Hundred Sixty-two. The next year a daughter was born, and they called her name Josephine.

Not long after her birth, Captain Tascher thought to mend his prospects by moving to one of the neighboring islands. His wife went with him, but they left the baby girl in the hands of a good old aunt, until they could corral fortune and make things secure, for this world at least.

They never came back, for they died and were buried.

Josephine never had any recollection of her parents. But the aunt was gentle and kindly, and life was simple and cheap. There was plenty to eat, and no clothing to speak of was required, for the Equator was only a stone's throw away; in fact, it was in sight of the house, as Josephine herself has said.

There was a Catholic church near, but no school. Yet Josephine learned to read and write. She sang with the negroes and danced and swam and played leap-frog. When she was nine years old, her aunt told her she must not play leap-frog any more, but she should learn to embroider and to play the harp and read poetry. Then she would grow up and be a fine lady.

And Josephine thought it a bit hard, but said she would try. ¶ She was tall and slender, but not very handsome. Her complexion was rather yellow, her hands bony. But the years brought grace, and even if her features were not pretty she had one thing that was better, a gentle voice. So far as I know, no one ever gave her lessons in voice culture either. Perhaps the voice is the true index of the soul. Josephine's voice was low, sweet, and so finely modulated that when

she spoke others would pause to listen—not to the words, just to the voice.

Occasionally, visitors came to the island and were received at the old rambling mansion where Josephine's aunt lived. From them the girl learned about the great, outside world with its politics and society and strife and rivalry; and when the visitor went away Josephine had gotten from him all he knew. So the young woman became wise without school and learned without books.

A year after the memorable year of Seventeen Hundred Seventy-six, there came to the island, Vicomte Alexander Beauharnais. He had come direct from America, where he had fought on the side of the Colonies against the British. He was full of Republican principles. Paradoxically, he was also rich and idle and somewhat of an adventurer.

He called at the old aunt's, Madame Renaudin's, and called often. He fell violently in love with Josephine. I say violently, for that was the kind of man he was. He was thirty, she was fifteen. His voice was rough and guttural, so I do not think he had much inward grace. Josephine's fine instincts rebelled at thought of accepting his proffered affection. She explained that she was betrothed to another, a neighboring youth of about her own age, whose thoughts and feelings matched hers.

¶ Beauharnais said that was nothing to him, and appealed to the old folks, displaying his title, submitting an inventory of his estate; and the old folks agreed to look into the matter. They did so and explained to Josephine that she should not longer hold out against the wishes of those who had done so much for her.

And so Josephine relented and they were married, although it can not truthfully be said that they lived happily ever afterward. They started for France on their wedding-tour. In six weeks they arrived in Paris. Returned soldiers and famed travelers are eagerly welcomed by society; especially is this so when the traveler brings a Creole wife from the Equator. The couple supplied a new thrill, and society in Paris is always eager for a new thrill.

Vicomte Beauharnais and his wife became quite the rage. It was expected that the Creole lady would be beautiful but dull; instead, she was not so very beautiful, but very clever. She dropped into all the graceful ways of polite society intuitively ♫ ♫

In a year, domestic life slightly interfered with society's claims—a son was born. They called his name Eugene ♫ Two more years and a daughter was born. They called her name Hortense.

Josephine was only twenty, but the tropics and social experience and maternity had given ripeness to her life. She became thoughtful and inclined rather to stay at home with her babies than chase fashion's butterflies.

Beauharnais chased fashion's butterflies, and caught them, too, for he came home late and quarreled with his wife—a sure sign.

He drank a little, gamed more, sought excitement, and talked politics needlessly loud in underground cafes.

Men who are wofully lax in their marriage relations are very apt to regard their wives with suspicion. If Beauharnais had been weighed in the balances he would have been found



wanton. He instituted proceedings against Josephine for divorce ❧ ❧

And Josephine packed up a few scanty effects and taking her two children started for her old home in the West Indies. It took all the money she had to pay passage.

It was the old, old story—a few years of gay life in the great city, then cruelty too great for endurance, tears, shut white lips, a firm resolve—and back to the old farm where homely, loyal hearts await, and outstretched arms welcome the sorrowful, yet glad return.

Beauharnais failed to get his divorce. The court said “no cause for action.” He awoke, stared stupidly about, felt the need of sympathy in his hour of undoing, and looked for—Josephine.

She was gone.

He tried absinthe, gambling, hot dissipation; but he could not forget. He had sent away his granary and storehouse; his wand of wealth and heart’s desire. Two ways opened for peace, only two: a loaded pistol—or get her back.

First he would try to get her back, and the pistol should be held in reserve in case of failure.

Josephine forgave and came back; for a good woman forgives to seventy times seven.

Beauharnais met her with all the tenderness a lover could command. The ceremony of marriage was again sacredly solemnized. They retired to the country and with their two children lived three of the happiest months Josephine ever knew; at least Josephine said so, and the fact that she made the same remark about several other occasions is no reason

for doubting her sincerity. Then they moved back to Paris. ¶ Beauharnais sobered his ambitions, and kept good hours. He was a soldier in the employ of the king, but his sympathies were with the people. He was a Republican with a Royalist bias, but some said he was a Royalist with a Republican bias. ¶ Josephine looked after her household, educated her children, did much charitable work, and knew what was going on in the State.

But those were troublous times. Murder was in the air and revolution was rife. That mob of a hundred thousand women had tramped out to Versailles and brought the king back to Paris. He had been beheaded, and Marie Antoinette had followed him. The people were in power and Beauharnais had labored to temper their wrath with reason. He had even been Chairman of the Third Convention. He called himself Citizen. But the fact that he was of noble birth was remembered, and in September of Seventeen Hundred Ninety-three, three men called at his house. When Josephine looked out of the window, she saw by the wan light of the moon a file of soldiers standing stiff and motionless.

She knew the time had come. They marched Citizen Beauharnais to the Luxembourg.

In a few feverish months, they came back for his wife. Her they placed in the nunnery of the Carmelites—that prison where, but a few months before, a mob relieved the keepers of their vigils by killing all their charges.

Robespierre was supreme. Now, Robespierre had come into power by undoing Danton. Danton had helped lug in the Revolution, but when he touched a match to the hay he

did not really mean to start a conflagration, only a bonfire. ¶ He tried to dampen the blaze, and Robespierre said he was a traitor and led him to the guillotine. Robespierre worked the guillotine until the bearings grew hot. Still, the people who rode in the death-tumbril did not seem so very miserable. Despair pushed far enough completes the circle and becomes peace—a peace like unto security. It is the last stage : hope is gone, but the comforting thought of heroic death and an eternal sleep takes its place.

When Josephine at the nunnery of the Carmelites received from the Luxembourg prison a package containing a generous lock of her husband's hair, she knew it had been purchased from the executioner.

Now the prison of the Carmelites was unfortunately rather crowded. In fact, it was full to the roof-tile. Five ladies were obliged to occupy one little cell. One of these ladies in the cell with Josephine was Madame Fontenay. Now Madame Fontenay was fondly loved by Citizen Tallien, who was a member of the Assembly over which Citizen Robespierre presided. Citizen Tallien did not explain his love for Madame to the public, because Madame chanced to be the wife of another. So how could Robespierre know that when he imprisoned Madame he was touching the tenderest tie that bound his friend Tallien to earth?

Robespierre sent word to the prison of the Carmelites that Madame Fontenay and Madame Beauharnais should prepare for death—they were guilty of plotting against the people.

¶ Now, Tallien came daily to the prison of the Carmelites, not to visit of course, but to see that the prisoners were

properly restrained. A cabbage-stalk was thrown out of a cell-window, and Tallien found in the stalk a note from his ladylove to this effect: "I am to die in two days; to save me you must overthrow Robespierre."

The next day there was trouble when the Convention met. Tallien got the platform and denounced Robespierre in a Cassius voice as a traitor—the arch enemy of the people—a plotter for self. To emphasize his remarks he brandished a glittering dagger. Other orations followed in like vein. All orders that Robespierre had given out were abrogated by acclamation. Two days and Robespierre was made to take a dose of the medicine he had so often prescribed for others. He was beheaded by Samson, his own servant, July Fifteenth, Seventeen Hundred Ninety-four.

Immediately all "suspects" imprisoned on his instigation were released.

Madame Fontenay and the widow Beauharnais were free. Soon after this Madame Fontenay became Madame Tallien. Josephine got her children back from the country, but her property was gone and she was in sore straits. But she had friends, yet none so loyal and helpful as Citizen Tallien and his wife. Their home was hers. And it was there she met a man by the name of Barras, and there too she met a man who was a friend of Barras; by name, Bonaparte—Napoleon Bonaparte. Bonaparte was twenty-six. He was five feet two inches high and weighed one hundred twenty pounds. He was beardless and looked like a boy, and at that time his face was illumined by an eruption.

Out of employment and waiting for something to turn up,

he yet had a very self-satisfied manner. ¶ His peculiar way of listening to conversation—absorbing everything and giving nothing out—made one uncomfortable. Josephine, seven years his senior, did not like the youth. She had had a wider experience and been better brought up than he, and she let him know it, but he did not seem especially abashed.



**J**UST what the French Revolution was no one has yet told us. Read "Carlyle" backward or forward and it is grand: it puts your head in a whirl of heroic intoxication, but it does not explain the Revolution. \* Suspicion, hate, tyranny, fear, mawkish sentimentality, mad desire, were in the air. One leader was deposed because he did nothing, and his successor was carried to the guillotine because he did too much. Convention after convention was dissolved and re-formed. On the Fourth of October, Seventeen Hundred Ninety-five, there was a howl and a roar and a shriek from forty thousand citizens of Paris. No one knew just what they wanted—the forty thousand did not explain. Perhaps it was nothing—only the leaders who wanted power. They demanded that the Convention should be dissolved: certain men must be put out and others put in.

The Convention convened and all the members felt to see if their heads were in proper place—tomorrow they might not be. The room was crowded to suffocation. Spectators filled the windows, perched on the gallery-railing, climbed and clung on the projecting parts of columns. High up on one of these columns sat the young man, Bonaparte, silent, unmoved, still waiting for something to turn up.

The Convention must protect itself, and the call was for Barras. Barras had once successfully parleyed with insurrection—he must do so again. Barras turned bluish-white, for he knew that to deal with this mob successfully a man must be blind and deaf to pity. He struggled to his feet—he looked about helplessly—the Convention silently waited to catch the words of its savior.



High up on a column Barras spied the lithe form of the artillery major, whom he had seen, with face of bronze, deal out grape and canister at Toulon. Barras raised his hand and pointing at the young officer cried, "There, there is the man who can save you!"

The Convention nominated the little man by acclamation as commander of the city's forces. He slid down from his perch, took half an hour to ascertain whether the soldiers were on the side of the mob or against it—for it was usually a toss-up—and decided to accept the command. Next day the mob surrounded the Tuileries in the name of Liberty, Fraternity and Equality. The Terrorists entreated the soldiers to throw down their arms, then they reviled and cajoled and cursed and sang, and the women as usual were in the vanguard. Paris recognized the divine right of insurrection. Who dare shoot into such a throng! ¶ The young artillery major dare. He gave the word and red death mowed wide swaths, and the balls spat against the walls and sang through the windows of the Church of Saint Roche where the mob was centered. Again and again he fired. It began at four by the clock, and at six all good people, and bad, had retired to their homes, and Paris was law-abiding. The Convention named Napoleon, General of the Interior, and the French Revolution became from that moment a thing that was.







F course, no one in Paris was so much talked of as the young artillery officer. Josephine was a bit proud that she had met him, and possibly a little sorry that she had treated him so coldly. He only wished to be polite!

Josephine was an honest woman, but still, she was a woman. She desired to be well thought of, and to be well thought of by men in power. Her son Eugene was fifteen, and she had ambitions for him: and to this end she saw the need of keeping in touch with the Powers. Josephine was a politician and a diplomat, for all women are diplomats. She arrayed Eugene in his Sunday-best and told him to go to the General of the Interior and explain that his name was Eugene Beauharnais, that his father was the martyred patriot, General Beauharnais, and that this beloved father's sword was in the archives over which Providence had placed the General of the Interior. Furthermore, the son should request that the sword of his father be given him so that it might be used in defense of France if need be.

And it was so done.

The whole thing was needlessly melodramatic, and Napoleon laughed. The poetry of war was to him a joke. But he stroked the youth's curls, asked after his mother, and ordered his secretary to go fetch that sword.

So the boy carried the sword home and was very happy, and his mother was very happy and proud of him, and she kissed him on both cheeks and kissed the sword and thought of the erring, yet generous man who once had carried it. Then she thought it would be but proper for her to go and

thank the man who had given the sword back; for had he not stroked her boy's curls and told him he was a fine young fellow, and asked after his mother!

So the next day she went to call on the man who had so graciously given the sword back. She was kept waiting a little while in the anteroom, for Napoleon always kept people waiting—it was a good scheme. When admitted to the presence, the General of the Interior, in simple corporal's dress, did not remember her. Neither did he remember about giving the sword back—at least he said so. He was always a trifler with women, though; and it was so delicious to have this tearful widow remove her veil and explain—for gadzooks! had she not several times allowed the mercury to drop to zero for his benefit?

And so she explained, and gradually it all came back to him—very slowly and after cross-questioning—and then he was so glad to see her. When she went away, he accompanied her to the outer door, bareheaded, and as they walked down the long hallway she noted the fact that he was not so tall as she by three inches. He shook hands with her as they parted, and said he would call on her when he had gotten a bit over the rush.

Josephine went home in a glow. She did not like the man—he had humiliated her by making her explain who she was, and his manner, too, was offensively familiar. And yet he was a power, there was no denying that, and to know men of power is a satisfaction to any woman. He was twenty years younger than Beauharnais, the mourned—twenty years! Then Beauharnais was tall and had a splendid beard

and wore a dangling sword. Beauharnais was of noble birth, educated, experienced, but he was dead; and here was a beardless boy being called the Chief Citizen of France. Well, well, well!

She was both pleased and hurt—hurt to think she had been humbled, and pleased to think such attentions had been paid her. In a few days the young general called on the widow to crave forgiveness for not having recognized her when she had called on him. It was very stupid in him, very! ♪ She forgave him.

He complimented Eugene in terse, lavish terms, and when he went away kissed Hortense, who was thirteen and thought herself too big to be kissed by a strange man. But Napoleon said they all seemed just like old friends. And seeming like old friends he called often.

Josephine knew Paris and Parisian society thoroughly. Fifteen years of close contact in success and defeat with statesmen, soldiers, diplomats, artists and literati had taught her much. It is probable that she was the most gifted woman in Paris. Now, Napoleon learned by induction as Josephine had, and as all women do, and as genius must, for life is short—only dullards spend eight years at Oxford ♪ He absorbed Josephine as the devilfish does its prey. And to get every thought and feeling that a good woman possesses you must win her completest love. In this close contact she gives up all—unlike Sapphira—holding nothing back. ¶ Among educated people, people of breeding and culture, Napoleon felt ill at ease. With this woman at his side he would be at home anywhere. And feeling at once that he

could win her only by honorable marriage he decided to marry her. He was ambitious. Has that been remarked before? Well, one can not always be original—still I think the facts bear out the statement. Josephine was ambitious, too, but somehow in this partnership she felt that she would bring more capital into the concern than he, and she hesitated ❀ ❀

But power had given dignity to the Little Man; his face had taken on the cold beauty of marble. Success was better than sarsaparilla ❀ Josephine was aware of his growing power, and his persistency was irresistible; and so one evening when he dropped in for a moment, her manner told all. He just took her in his arms, and kissing her very tenderly whispered, "My dear, together we will win," and went his way. When he wished to be, Napoleon was the ideal lover; he was master of that fine forbearance, flavored with a dash of audacity, that women so appreciate. He never wore love to a frazzle, nor caressed the object of his affections into fidgets; neither did he let her starve, although at times she might go hungry.

However, the fact remains that Josephine married the man to get rid of him; but that's a thing women are constantly doing ❀ ❀

The ceremony was performed by a Justice of the Peace, March Ninth, Seventeen Hundred Ninety-six. It was just five months since the bride had called to thank the groom for giving back her husband's sword, and fifteen months after this husband's death. Napoleon was twenty-seven; Josephine was thirty-three, but the bridegroom swore he

was twenty-eight and the lady twenty-nine. As a fabricator he wins our admiration.

Twelve days after the marriage, Napoleon set out for Italy as Commander-in-Chief of the army. To trace the brilliant campaign of that year, when the tricolor of France was carried from the Bay of Biscay to the Adriatic Sea, is not my business. Suffice it to say that it placed the name of Bonaparte among the foremost names of military leaders of all time. But amid the restless movement of grim war and the glamor of success he never for a day forgot his Josephine. His letters breathe a youthful lover's affection, and all the fond desires of his heart were hers. Through her he also knew the pulse and temperature of Paris—its form and pressure.

It was a year before they saw each other. She came on to Milan and met him there. They settled in Montebello, at a beautiful country seat, six miles from the city. From there he conducted negotiations for peace—and she presided over the gay social circles of the ancient capital. "I gain provinces; you win hearts," said Napoleon. It was a very Napoleonic remark.

Napoleon had already had Eugene with him, and together they had seen the glory of battle. Now Hortense was sent for, and they were made Napoleon's children by adoption. These were days of glowing sunshine and success and warm affection ❀ ❀

And so Napoleon with his family returned to France amid bursts of applause, proclaimed everywhere the Savior of the State, its Protector, and all that. Civil troubles had all



vanished in the smoke of war with foreign enemies. Prosperity was everywhere, the fruits of conquest had satisfied all, and the discontented class had been drawn off into the army and killed or else was now cheerfully boozy with success ❀ ❀

Napoleon made allies of all powers he could not easily undo, and proffered his support—biding his time. Across the English Channel he looked and stared with envious eyes. Josephine had tasted success and known defeat. Napoleon had only tasted success. She begged that he would rest content and hold secure that which he had gained. Success in its very nature must be limited, she said. He laughed and would not hear it. For the first time she felt her influence over him was waning. She had given her all; he greedily absorbed, and now had come to believe in his own omniscience. He told her that on a pinch he could get along without her—within himself he held all power. Then he kissed her hand in mock gallantry and led her to the door, as he would be alone.

When Napoleon started on the Egyptian campaign, Josephine begged to go with him; other women went, dozens of them. They seemed to look upon it as a picnic party. But Napoleon, insisting that absence makes the heart grow fonder, said his wife should remain behind.

Josephine was too good and great for the wife of such a man. She saw through him. She understood him, and only honest men are willing to be understood. He was tired of her, for she no longer ministered to his vanity. He had captured her, and now he was done with her. Besides that, she sided

with the peace party, and this was intolerable. Still he did not beat her with a stick; he treated her most graciously, and installing her at beautiful Malmaison, provided her everything to make her happy.

And if "things" could make one happy, she would have been.

¶ And as for the Egyptian campaign, it surely was a picnic party, or it was until things got so serious that frolic was supplanted by fear. You can't frolic with your hair on end like quills upon the fretful porcupine. Napoleon did not write to his wife. He frolicked. Occasionally his secretary sent her a formal letter of instruction, and when she at last wrote him asking an explanation for such strange silence, the Little Man answered her with accusations of infidelity.

Josephine decided to secure a divorce, and there is pretty good proof that papers were prepared; and had the affair been carried along, the courts would have at once allowed the separation on statutory grounds. However, the papers were destroyed, and Josephine decided to live it out. But Napoleon had heard of these proposed divorce proceedings and was furious. When he came back, it was with the intention of immediate legal separation—in any event separation ❀ ❀

He came back and held out haughtily for three days, addressing her as "Madame," and refusing so much as to shake hands. After the three days he sued for peace and cried it out on his knees with his head in her lap. It was not genuine humility, only the humility that follows debauch. Napoleon had many kind impulses, but his mood was selfish indifference to the rights or wishes of others. He did not hold hate,



yet the thought of a divorce from Josephine was palliated in his own mind by the thought that she had first suggested it. "I took her at her word," he once said to Bertram, as if the thing were pricking him.

And so matters moved on. There was war, and rumors of war, alway; but the vanquished paid the expenses. It was thought best that France should be ruled by three consuls. Three men were elected, with Napoleon as First Consul. The First Consul bought off the Second and Third Consuls and replaced them with two wooden men from the Twenty-first Ward.

Josephine worked for the glory of France and for her husband: she was diplomat and adviser. She placated enemies and made friends.

France prospered, and in the wars the foreigner usually not only paid the bills, but a goodly tribute beside. Nothing is so good as war to make peace at home. An insurrectionist at home makes a splendid soldier abroad. Napoleon's battles were won by the "dangerous class."

As the First Consul was Emperor in fact, the wires were pulled, and he was made so in name. His wife was made Empress: it must be so, as a breath of disapproval might ruin the whole scheme. Josephine was beloved by the people, and the people must know that she was honored by her husband. With a woman's intuition, Josephine saw the end—power grows until it topples. She pleaded, begged—it was of no avail—the tide swept her with it, but whither, whither? she kept asking.

Meantime Hortense had been married to Louis, brother of

Napoleon. In due time Napoleon found himself a grandfather. He both liked it and did n't. He considered himself a youth and took a pride in being occasionally mistaken for a recruit, and here some newspaper had called him "granddaddy," and people had laughed! He was not even a father, except by law—not Nature—and that 's no father at all, for Nature does not recognize law. He joked with Josephine about it, and she turned pale.

There is no subject on which men so deceive themselves as concerning their motives for doing certain things. On no subject do mortals so deceive themselves as their motives for marriage. Their acts may be all right, but the reasons they give for doing them never are. Napoleon desired a new wife, because he wished a son to found a dynasty.

"You have Eugene!" said Josephine.

"He 's my son by proxy," said Napoleon, with a weary smile ❧ ❧

All motives, like ores, are found mixed, and counting the whole at one hundred, Napoleon's desire for a son after the flesh should stand as ten—other reasons ninety. All men wish to be thought young. Napoleon was forty, and his wife was forty-seven. Talleyrand had spoken of them as Old Mr. and Mrs. Bonaparte.

A man of forty is only a giddy youth, according to his own estimate. Girls of twenty are his playfellows. A man of sixty, with a wife forty, and babies coming, is not old—bless me! But suppose his wife is nearly seventy—what then! Napoleon must have a young wife. Then by marrying Marie Louise, Austria could be held as friend: it was very necessary to do

this. Austria must be secured as an ally at any cost—even at the cost of Josephine. It was painful, but must be done for the good of France. The State should stand first in the mind of every loyal, honest man: all else is secondary.

So Josephine was divorced, but was provided with an annuity that was preposterous in its lavish proportions. It amounted to over half a million dollars a year.

I once knew a man who, on getting home from the club at two o'clock in the morning, was reproached by his wife for his shocking condition. He promptly threw the lady over the banisters. Next day he purchased her a diamond necklace at the cost of a year's salary, but she could not wear it out in society for a month on account of her black eye.

Napoleon divorced Josephine that he might be the father of a line of kings. When he abdicated in Eighteen Hundred Fifteen, he declared his son, the child of Marie Louise, "Napoleon the Second, Emperor of France," and the world laughed. The son died before he had fairly reached manhood's estate. Napoleon the Third, son of Hortense, Queen of Holland, the grandson of Josephine, reigned long and well as Emperor of France. The Prince Imperial—a noble youth—great-grandson of Josephine, was killed in Africa while fighting the battle of the nation that undid Napoleon.

Josephine was a parent of kings: Napoleon was not.

When Bonaparte was banished to Elba, and Marie Louise was nowhere to be seen, Josephine wrote to him words of consolation, offering to share his exile.

She died not long after—on the Second of June, Eighteen Hundred Fourteen. ¶ After viewing that gaudy tomb at the

Invalides, and thinking of the treasure in tears and broken hearts that it took to build it, it will rest you to go to the simple village church at Ruel, a half-hour's ride from the Arc de Triomphe, where sleeps Josephine, Empress of France.







MARY SHELLEY

MARY W. SHELLEY





**S**HELLEY, beloved! the year has a new name from any thou knowest. When Spring arrives, leaves that you never saw will shadow the ground, and flowers you never beheld will star it, and the grass will be of another growth. Thy name is added to the list which makes the earth bold in her age, and proud of what has been. Time, with slow, but unwearied feet, guides her to the goal that thou hast reached; and I, her unhappy child, am advanced still nearer the hour when my earthly dress shall repose near thine, beneath the tomb of Cestius.

—“Journal of Mary Shelley.”



# MARY W. SHELLEY



**W**HEN Emerson borrowed from Wordsworth that fine phrase about plain living and high thinking, no one was more astonished than he that Whitman and Thoreau should take him at his word. He was decidedly curious about their experiment. But he kept a safe distance between himself and the shirt-sleeved Walt; and as for Henry Thoreau—bless me! Emerson regarded him only as a fine savage, and told him so. Of course, Emerson loved solitude, but it was the solitude of a library or an orchard, and not the solitude of plain or wilderness. Emerson looked upon Beautiful Truth as an honored guest. He adored her, but it was with the adoration of the intellect. He never got her tag in jolly chase of comradery; nor did he converse with her, soft and low, when only the moon peeked out from behind the silvery clouds, and the nightingale listened. He never laid himself open to damages. And when he threw a bit of a bomb into Harvard Divinity School it was the shrewdest bid for fame that ever preacher made ❧ ❧

I said “shrewd”—that’s the word ❧ Emerson had the instincts of Connecticut—that peculiar development of men who have eked out existence on a rocky soil,

banking their houses against grim Winter or grimmer savage foes. With this Yankee shrewdness went a subtle and sweeping imagination, and a fine appreciation of the excellent things that men have said and done. But he was never so foolish as to imitate the heroic—he simply admired it from afar. He advised others to work their poetry up into life, but he did not do so himself. He never cast the bantling on the rocks, nor caused him to be suckled with the she-wolf's teat. He admired "abolition" from a distance. When he went away from home it was always with a return ticket. He has summed up Friendship in an essay as no other man ever has, and yet there was a self-protective aloofness in his friendship that made icicles gather, as George William Curtis has explained.

In no relation of his life was there a complete abandon. His "Essay on Self-Reliance" is beef, iron and wine, and "Works and Days" is a tonic for tired men; and yet I know that, in spite of all his pretty talk about living near Nature's heart, he never ventured into the woods outside of hallooing distance from the house. He could neither ride a horse, shoot, nor sail a boat—and being well aware of it, never tried. All his farming was done by proxy; and when he writes to Carlyle late in life, explaining how he is worth forty thousand dollars, well secured by first mortgages, he makes clear one-half of his ambition. ¶ And yet, I call him master, and will match my admiration for him 'gainst that of any other, six nights and days together. But I summon him here only to contrast his character with that of another—another who, like himself, was twice married.

In his "Essay on Love" Emerson reveals just an average sophomore insight; and in his work I do not find a mention or a trace of influence exercised by either of the two women he wedded, nor by any other woman. Shelley was what he was through the influence of the two women he married. ¶ Shelley wrecked the life of one of these women. She found surcease of sorrow in death; and when her body was found in the Serpentine he had a premonition that the hungry waves were waiting for him, too. But before her death and through her death, she pressed home to him the bitterest sorrow that man can ever know: the combined knowledge that he has mortally injured a human soul and the sense of helplessness to minister to its needs. Harriet Westbrook said to Shelley, drink ye all of it. And could he speak now he would say that the bitterness of the potion was a formative influence as potent as that of the gentle ministrations of Mary Wollstonecraft, who broke over his head the precious vase of her heart's love and wiped his feet with the hairs of her head.

In the poetic sweetness, gentleness, loveliness and beauty of their natures, Emerson and Shelley were very similar. In a like environment they would have done the same things. A pioneer ancestry with its struggle for material existence would have given Shelley caution; and a noble patronymic, fostered by the State, lax in its discipline, would have made Emerson toss discretion to the winds.

Emerson and Shelley were both apostles of the good, the true and the beautiful. One of them rests at Sleepy Hollow, his grave marked by a great rough-hewn boulder, while overhead

the winds sigh a requiem through the pines. The ashes of the other were laid beneath the moss-grown wall of the Eternal City, and the creeping vines and flowers, as if jealous of the white, carven marble, snuggle close over the spot with their leaves and petals.

Yet both of these men achieved immortality, for their thoughts live again in the thoughts of the race, and their hopes and their aspirations mingle and are one with the men and women of earth who think and feel and dream.





**I**T was Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin who awoke in Shelley such a burst of song that men yet listen to its cadence. It was she who gave his soul wings: her gentle spirit blending with his made music that has enriched the world. Without her he was fast beating out his life against the bars of unkind condition, but together they worked and sang. All his best lines were recited to her, all were weighed in the critical balances of her woman's judgment. She it was who first wrote it out, and then gave it back. Together they revised; and after he had passed on, she it was who collected the scattered leaves, added the final word, and gave us the book we call "Shelley's Poems." Perhaps we might call all poetry the child of parents, but with Shelley's poems this is literally true.

Mary Shelley delighted in the name, Wollstonecraft. It was her mother's name; and was not Mary Wollstonecraft the foremost intellectual woman of her day—a woman of purpose, forceful yet gentle, appreciative, kind?

Mary Wollstonecraft was born in Seventeen Hundred Fifty-nine; and tiring of the dull monotony of a country town went up to London when yet a child and fought the world alone. By her own efforts she grew learned; she had all science, all philosophy, all history at her fingers' ends. She became able to speak several languages, and by her pen an income was secured that was not only sufficient for herself, but ministered to the needs of an aged father and mother and sisters as well.

Mary Wollstonecraft wrote one great book (which is all any one can write): "A Vindication of the Rights of

Woman." It sums up all that has since been written on the subject. Like an essay by Herbert Spencer, it views the matter from every side, anticipates every objection—exhausts the subject. The literary style of Mary Wollstonecraft's book is Johnsonese, but its thought forms the base of all that has come after. It is the great-great-grandmother of all woman's clubs and these thousand efforts that women are now putting forth along economic, artistic and social lines. But we have nearly lost sight of Mary Wollstonecraft. Can you name me, please, your father's grandmother? Aye, I thought not; then tell me the name of the man who is now Treasurer of the United States!

And so you see we do not know much about other people, after all. But Mary Wollstonecraft pushed the question of woman's freedom to its farthest limit; I told you that she exhausted the subject. She prophesied a day when woman would have economic freedom—that is, be allowed to work at any craft or trade for which her genius fitted her and receive a proper recompense. Woman would also have social freedom: the right to come and go alone—the privilege of walking upon the street without the company of a man—the right to study and observe. Next, woman would have political freedom: the right to record her choice in matters of lawmaking. And last, she would yet have sex freedom: the right to bestow her love without prying police and blundering law interfering in the delicate relations of married life.

To make herself understood, Mary Wollstonecraft explained that society was tainted with the thought that sex was

unclean; but she held high the ideal that this would yet pass away, and that the idea of holding one's mate by statute law would become abhorrent to all good men and women. She declared that the assumption that law could join a man and woman in holy wedlock was preposterous, and that the caging of one person by another for a lifetime was essentially barbaric. Only the love that is free and spontaneous and that holds its own by the purity, the sweetness, the tenderness and the gentleness of its life is divine. And further, she declared it her belief that when a man had found his true mate such a union would be for life—it could not be otherwise. ♫ And the man holding his mate by the excellence that was in him, instead of by the aid of the law, would be placed, loverlike, on his good behavior, and be a stronger and manlier being. Such a union, freed from the petty, spying and tyrannical restraints of present usage, must come ere the race could far advance.

Mary Wollstonecraft's book created a sensation. It was widely read and hotly denounced. A few upheld it: among these was William Godwin. But the air was so full of taunt and threat that Miss Wollstonecraft thought best to leave England for a time. She journeyed to Paris, and there wrote and translated for certain English publishers. In Paris she met Gilbert Imlay, an American, seemingly of very much the same temperament as herself. She was thirty-six, he was somewhat younger. They began housekeeping on the ideal basis. In a year a daughter was born to them. When this baby was three months old, Imlay disappeared, leaving Mary penniless and friendless.

It was a terrible blow to this trusting and gentle woman. But after a good cry or two, philosophy came to her rescue and she decided that to be deserted by a man who did not love her was really not so bad as to be tied to him for life. She earned a little money and in a short time started back for England with her babe and scanty luggage—sorrowful, yet brave and unsubdued. She might have left her babe behind, but she scorned the thought. She would be honest and conceal nothing. Right must win.

Now, I am told that an unmarried woman with a babe at her breast is not received in England into the best society. The tale of Mary's misfortune had preceded her, and literary London laughed a hoarse, guttural guffaw, and society tittered to think how this woman who had written so smartly had tried some of her own medicine and found it bitter. Publishers no longer wanted her work, old friends failed to recognize her, and one man to whom she applied for work brought a rebuke upon his head, that lasted him for years. ¶ Godwin, philosopher, idealist, enthusiast and reformer, who made it his rule to seek out those in trouble, found her and told a needless lie by declaring he had been commissioned by a certain nameless publisher to get her to write certain articles about this and that. Then he emptied his pockets of all the small change he had, as an advance payment, and he had n't very much, and started out to find the publisher who would buy the prospective "hot stuff." Fortunately he succeeded.

After a few weeks, Mr. Godwin, bachelor, aged forty, found himself very much in love with Mary Wollstonecraft and

her baby. Her absolute purity of purpose, her frankness, honesty and high ideals surpassed anything he had ever dreamed of finding incarnated in woman. He became her sincere lover; and she, the discarded, the forsaken, reciprocated; for it seems that the tendrils of affection, ruthlessly uprooted, cling to the first object that presents itself.

And so they were married; yes, these two who had so generously repudiated the marriage-tie were married March Twenty-ninth, Seventeen Hundred Ninety-seven, at Old Saint Pancras Church, for they had come to the sane conclusion that to affront society was not wise.

On August Thirtieth, Seventeen Hundred Ninety-seven, was born to them a daughter. Then the mother died—died did brave Mary Wollstonecraft, and left behind a girl baby one week old. And it was this baby, grown to womanhood, who became Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley.



**G**ODWIN wrote one great book: "Political Justice." It is a work so high and noble in its outlook that only a Utopia could ever realize its ideals. When men are everywhere willing to give to other men all the rights they demand for themselves, and co-operation takes the place of competition, then will Godwin's philosophy be not too great and good for daily food. Among the many who read his book and thought they saw in it the portent of a diviner day was one Percy Bysshe Shelley.

And so it came to pass that about the year Eighteen Hundred Thirteen, this Percy Bysshe Shelley called on Godwin, who was living in a rusty, musty tenement in Somerstown. The young man was twenty: tall and slender, with as handsome a face as was ever given to mortal. The face was pale as marble: the features almost feminine in their delicacy: thin lips, straight nose, good teeth, abundant, curling hair, and eyes so dreamy and sorrowful that women on the street would often turn and follow the "angel soul garbed in human form."

This man Shelley was sick at heart, bereft, perplexed, in sore straits, and to whom should he turn for advice in this time of undoing but to Godwin, the philosopher! Besides, Godwin had been the husband of Mary Wollstonecraft, and the splendid precepts of these two had nourished into being all the latent excellence of the youth. Yes, he would go to Godwin, the Plato of England!

And so he went to Godwin.

Now, this young man Shelley was of noble blood. His grandfather was Sir Bysshe Shelley, Bart., and worth near



three hundred thousand pounds, all of which would some day come to our pale-faced youth. But the youth was a republican—he believed in the brotherhood of man. He longed to benefit his fellows, to lift them out of the bondage of fear, and sin, and ignorance. After reading Hume, and Godwin, and Wollstonecraft, he had decided that Christianity as defined by the Church of England was a failure: it was only an organized fetich, kept in place by the State, and devoid of all that thrills to noble thinking and noble doing ❀ ❀

And so young Shelley at Oxford had written a pamphlet to this end, explaining the matter to the world.

A copy being sent to the headmaster of the school, young Shelley was hustled off the premises in short order and a note sent to his father requesting that the lad be well flogged and kept several goodly leagues from Oxford.

Shelley the elder was furious that his son should so disgrace the family name, and demanded he should write another pamphlet supporting the Church of England and recanting all the heresy he had uttered. Young Percy replied that conscience would not admit of his doing this. The father said conscience be blanked: and further used almost the same words that were used by Professor Jowett some years later to a certain skeptical youth.

Professor Jowett sent for the youth and said, "Young man, I am told that you say you can not find God. Is this true?"

¶ "Yes, sir," said the youth.

"Well, you will please find Him before eight o'clock tonight or get out of this college."



Shelley was not allowed to return home, and moreover his financial allowance was cut off entirely.

And so he wandered up to London and chewed the cud of bitter fancy, resolved to starve before he would abate one jot or tittle of what he thought was truth. And he might have starved had not his sisters sent him scanty sums of money from time to time. The messenger who carried the money to him was a young girl by the name of Harriet Westbrook, round and smooth and pink and sixteen. Percy was nineteen. Harriet was the daughter of an innkeeper and did not get along very well at home. She told Percy about it, and of course she knew his troubles, and so they talked about it over the gate, and mutually condoled with each other ❀ ❀

Soon after this Harriet had a fresh quarrel with her folks; and with the tears yet on her pretty lashes ran straight to Shelley's lodging and throwing herself into his arms proposed that they cease to fight unkind Fate, and run away together and be happy ever afterward.

And so they ran away.

Shelley's father instanced this as another proof of depravity and said, "Let 'em go!" The couple went to Scotland. In a few months they came back from Scotland, because no one can really be happy away from home. Besides they were out of money—and neither one had ever earned any money—and as the Westbrooks were willing to forgive, even if the Shelleys were not, they came back. But the Westbrooks were only willing to forgive in consideration of Percy and Harriet being properly married by a clergyman of the Church

of England. Now, Shelley had not wavered in his Godwin-Wollstonecraft theories, but he was chivalrous and Harriet was tearful, and so he gracefully waived all private considerations and they were duly married. It was a quiet wedding ❀ ❀

In a short time a baby was born.

Harriet was amiable, being healthy and having very moderate sensibilities. She had no opinion on any subject, and in no degree sympathized with Shelley's wild aspirations. She thought a title would be nice, and urged that her husband make peace by renouncing his "infidelity." Literature was silly business anyway, and folks should do as other folks did. If they did n't, lawks-a-daisy! there was trouble!!

And so, with income cut off, banished from home, from school, out of employment, with a wife who had no sympathy with him—who could not understand him—whose pitiful weakness stung him and wrung him, he thought of Godwin, the philosopher: for at the last philosophy is the cure for all our ills.

Godwin was glad to see Shelley—Godwin was glad to see any one. Godwin was fifty-five, bald, had a Socratic forehead, was smooth-cheeked, shabby and genteel. Yes, Godwin was the author of "Political Justice"—but that was written quite a while before, twenty years!

One of the girls was sent out for a quart of half-and-half, and the pale visitor cast his eyes around this family room, which served for dining-room, library and parlor. Godwin had married again—Shelley had heard that, but he was a bit shocked to find that the great man who was once

mate to Mary Wollstonecraft had married a shrew. The sound of her high-pitched voice convinced the visitor at once that she was a very commonplace person.

There were three girls and a boy in the room, busy at sewing or reading. None of them was introduced, but the air of the place was Bohemian, and the conversation soon became general. All talked except one of the girls: she sat reading, and several times when the young man glanced over her way she was looking at him. Shelley stayed an hour, spending a very pleasant time, but as he had no opportunity of stating his case to the philosopher he made an engagement to call again.

¶ As he groped his way downstairs and walked homewards he mused. The widow Clairmont, whom Godwin had married, was a worldling, that was sure; her daughter Jane was good-looking and clever, but both she and Charles, the boy, were the children of their mother—he had picked them out intuitively. The little young woman with brown eyes and merry ways was Fanny Godwin, the first child of Mary Wollstonecraft and adopted daughter of Godwin. The tall slender girl who was so very quiet was the daughter of Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft.

“Ye gods, what a pedigree!” said Shelley.

The young man called again, and after explaining his situation was advised to go back home and make peace with his wife and father at any cost of personal intellectual qualms. Philosophy was all right; but life was one thing and philosophy another. Live with Harriet as he had vowed to do—love was a good deal glamour, anyway; write poetry, of course, if he felt like it, but keep it to himself. The world

was not to be moved by enthusiastic youth. Godwin had tried it—he had been an enthusiastic youth himself, and that was why he now lived in Somerstown instead of Piccadilly. Move in the line of least resistance.

Shelley went away shocked and stunned. Going by Old Saint Pancras Church he turned back to step in a moment and recover his scattered senses. He walked through the cool, dim, old building, out into the churchyard, where toppling moss-covered gray slabs marked the resting-places of the sleeping dead. All seemed so cool and quiet and calm there! the dead are at rest: they have no vexatious problems.

¶ A few people were moving about, carelessly reading the inscriptions. The young man unconsciously followed their example; he passed slowly along one of the walks, scanning the stones. His eye fell upon the word "Wollstonecraft," marked on a plain little slate slab. He paused and, leaning over, removed his hat and read, and then glancing just beyond, saw seated on the grass—the tall girl. She held a book in her hands, but she was looking at him very soberly. Their eyes met, and they smiled just a little. The young man sat down on the turf on the other side of the grave from the girl, and they talked of the woman by whose dust they watched: and the young man found that the tall girl was an Ancestor-Worshiper and a mystic, and moreover had a flight of soul that held him in awe. Besides, in form and feature, she was rarely beautiful. ♣ She was quiet, but she could talk. ¶ The next day, as Percy Shelley strolled through the churchyard of Old Saint Pancras, the tall girl was there again with her book, in the same place.

**W**HEN Shelley made that first call at the Godwins he was twenty. The three girls he met were fifteen, sixteen and seventeen, respectively. Mary being the youngest in years, but the most mature, she would have easily passed for the oldest. Now, all three of these girls were dazzled by the beauty and grace and intellect of the strange, pale-faced visitor.

He came to the house again and again during the next few months. All the girls loved him violently, for that's the way girls under eighteen often love. Mr. Godwin discovered the fact that all his girls loved Shelley. They lost appetite, and were alternately in chills of fear and fevers of ecstasy. Mr. Godwin, being a kind man and a good, took occasion to explain to them that Mr. Shelley was a married man, and although it was true that he did not live on good terms with his wife, yet she was his lawful wife, and marriage was a sacred obligation: of course, pure philosophy or poetic justice took a different view, but in society the marriage-tie must not be held lightly. In short, Shelley was married and that was all there was about it.

Shelley still continued to call, coming via Saint Pancras Church. In a few months, Mary confided to Jane that she and Shelley were about to elope, and Jane must make peace and explain matters after they were gone.

Jane cried and declared she would go, too—she would go or die: she would go as servant, scullion—anything, but go she would. Shelley was consulted, and to prevent tragedy consented to Jane going as maid to Mary, his well-beloved.

¶ So the trinity eloped. It being Shelley's second elopement,



he took the matter a little more coolly than did the girls, who had never eloped before. Having reached Dover, and while waiting at a hotel for the boat, the landlord suddenly appeared and breathlessly explained to Shelley, "A fat woman has just arrived and swears that you have run away with her girls!"

It was Mrs. Godwin.

The party got out by the back way and hired a small boat to take them to Calais. They embarked in a storm, and after beating about all night, came in sight of France the next morning as the sun arose.

Godwin was very much grieved and shocked to think that Shelley had broken in upon established order and done this thing. But Shelley had read Godwin's book and simply taken the philosopher at his word: "The impulses of the human heart are just and right; they are greater than law, and must be respected."

The runaways seemed to have had a jolly time in France as long as their money lasted. They bought a mule to carry their luggage, and walked. Jane's feet blistered, however, and they seated her upon the luggage upon the mule, and as the author of "Queen Mab" led the patient beast, Mary with a switch followed behind. After some days Shelley sprained his ankle, and then it was his turn to ride while Mary led the mule and Jane trudged after.

Thus they journeyed for six weeks, writing poetry, discussing philosophy; loving, wild, free, and careless, until they came to Switzerland. One morning they counted their money and found they had just enough to take them to England.

Arriving in London the Godwins were not inclined to take them back, and society in general looked upon them with complete disfavor.

Shelley's father was now fully convinced of his son's depravity, but doled out enough money to prevent actual starvation. Shelley began to perceive that any man who sets himself against the established order—the order that the world has been thousands of years in building up—will be ground into the dust. The old world may be wrong, but it can not be righted in a day, and so long as a man chooses to live in society he must conform, in the main, to society usages. These old ways that have done good service all the years can not be replaced by the instantaneous process. If changed at all they must change as man changes, and man must change first. It is man that must be reformed, not custom. ¶ Shelley and Mary Godwin were mates if ever such existed. In a year Mary had developed from a child into splendid womanhood—a beautiful, superior, earnest woman. By her own efforts, of course aided by Shelley (for they were partners in everything), she became versed in the classics and delved deeply into the literature of a time long past. Unlike her mother, Mary Shelley could do no great work alone. The sensitiveness and the delicacy of her nature precluded that self-reliant egoism which can create. She wrote one book, "Frankenstein," which in point of prophetic and allegorical suggestion stamps the work as classic: but it was written under the immediate spell of Shelley's presence. Shelley also could not work alone, and without her the world's disfavor must have whipped him into insanity



and death. ¶ As it was they sought peace in love and Italy, living near Lord Byron in great intimacy, and befriended by him in many ways.

But peace was not for Shelley. Calamity was at the door. He could never forget how he had lifted Harriet Westbrook into a position for which she was not fitted and then left her to flounder alone. And when word came that Harriet had drowned herself, his cup of woe was full. Shortly before this, Fanny Godwin had gone away with great deliberation, leaving an empty laudanum-bottle to tell the tale.

On December-Thirtieth, Eighteen Hundred Sixteen, Shelley and Mary Godwin were married at Saint Mildred's Church, London. Both had now fully concluded with Godwin that man owes a duty to the unborn and to society, and that to place one's self in opposition to custom is at least very bad policy.

But although Shelley had made society tardy amends, society would not forgive; and in a long legal fight to obtain possession of his children, Ianthe and Charles, of whom Harriet was the mother, the Court of Chancery decided against Shelley, on the grounds that he was "an unfit person, being an atheist and a republican."

About this time was born little Allegra, "the Dawn," child of Lord Byron and Jane Clairmont. Then afterwards came bickerings with Byron and threats of a duel and all that ♣ ♣

Finally there was a struggle between Byron and Miss Clairmont for the child: but death solved the issue and the beautiful little girl passed beyond the reach of either.

SO HERE ENDETH BOOK TWO OF FAMOUS WOMEN, THE  
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THE WHOLE DONE INTO A PRINTED VOLUME BY THE  
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